2020 started like any other year with cold short days. Soon we learned that it would be a year like no other with sickness, isolation and a feeling of being unsettled. As artists we could take solace in creating, it’s a solitary activity. As an arts alliance we wanted to share with each other, to talk about our art, to show our art, to sell our art. We like having events. There were to be no events. We made the best out of bad situation.

We realized that there were those who were much worse off. Anita S. suggested that we give the gift of art to those shut completely off – residents of nursing homes and veterans homes. We gave our art to the residents and the staff of three nursing homes and a veterans’ home. All in all we gave 330 pieces of art. The gifts were well received. Then as the lock down continued we drew coloring pages and made packets with colored pencils, markers or crayons for the residents to color. One of our members began “plarning”, knitting with plastic. We collected grocery bags and brought them to her each month. She made a mat for the homeless, (as well as hats, purses, and ornaments).

We did not meet in April but by May we did start meeting again although fewer in number, spacing apart and wearing our masks. We cancelled classes. We began sharing our art and what art meant to us. One member said, “It’s like a therapy session.” And indeed, we do need to talk and share about our art. We learned that being creative is healthy for the brain and soothes the stress of our times.
We realized that we should try to sell online. Linda H. created the Facebook store. We are still learning about selling online, but we have started the process. We are participating with the library in a zoom program called “Meet the Artist.”

As things began to be cancelled, we encouraged each other to continue to create, to experiment and try new media and techniques. We enjoyed seeing each other’s work. Linda E. created what she calls “Nature Art” and has been quite successful with it.

It has been a quieter year. Two of arts and crafts shows were cancelled due to covid regulations. We were able to finish the year with our gallery sale. We decided to give a portion of our profits to the nonprofit Hollis Center, since they have had to cancel most of their fundraising activities this year including the Winter Art Fair in which we usually participate.

We miss seeing everyone, but understand there are difficult circumstances. Our good friend Joanne moved away. We have met some new folks too. All in all it has been a learning year and that is good.

https://www.bonnerspringsartsalliance.org/