

PRESS RELEASE

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Between the Lines

A WWII Letter-Inspired Art Exhibit Telling a Story of Devotion Across the Pacific

A Solo Art Exhibition by Marilyn Dale

Schoenherr Art Gallery, Wentz Fine Arts Center, North Central College, 171 E. Chicago Ave, Naperville, IL 60540

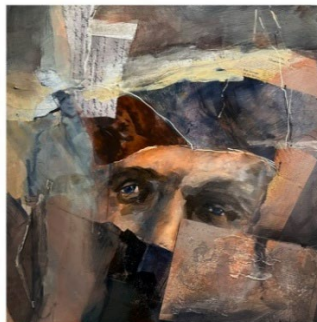
Exhibition Dates: Oct. 21 to Dec. 5, 2025

Hours: Tues. 11:30-7 | Thurs. 11:30-6 | Fri. 2:30-7 | Sat. 10-4

Reception: Veterans Day, Tues., Nov. 11, 2025, from 6 pm to 8 pm (refreshments, open to the public)

Meet the Artist: Sat., Nov 8, 2025, from Noon to 2 pm

North Central College and Naperville artist Marilyn Dale present *Between the Lines*, a moving solo exhibition that translates over 500 World War II-era letters into evocative mixed-media paintings.



These deeply personal letters were written by the artist's father, Chester, to her mother, Irene, while he served in the Pacific Theater in 1944 and 1945. Though never overtly romantic, his letters—written nearly every day when possible—reveal a quiet emotional intimacy, even as he shielded her from the horrors he was experiencing. Six months after the war with Japan ended, the couple married.

The letters had been saved for decades, surviving a shed fire and a move, then sat untouched for 25 years following Irene's death. When Dale retired as a marketing executive in early 2024, she returned to her first love—artmaking—and finally turned to the project that had long lived in the back of her mind: transforming her parents' wartime correspondence into an exhibition. Several months into the work, Dale realized the timing held deeper significance—2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII in the Pacific, officially declared on September 2, 1945—also Irene's birthday.



In *Between the Lines*, Dale incorporates many of the actual letters, personal photographs, devotionals, and wartime ephemera into the layered surfaces of her paintings. The work explores three emotional currents that run through the correspondence: *longing*—for love, family, and normalcy, *faith*—in survival, in

God, and in the power of prayer, and *camaraderie*—the constant, unspoken bond between soldiers who endured the unendurable together.

Between the Lines is both an act of remembrance and a quiet revelation of how love took shape not in grand gestures, but in daily words, faithfully written across oceans and silence.

Schoenherr Art Gallery, Wentz Fine Arts Center, 171 E. Chicago Ave. Naperville IL 60540, is open to the public Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-7pm and Saturdays from 11 am to 4 pm. A free reception for the public will be held on Veterans Day, Tuesday, November 11, 2025, from 6-8 pm. More information is available at www.marilyndale.com/letters.

About Marilyn Dale

Marilyn Dale is a contemporary painter whose original works have been juried into multiple galleries and exhibitions. Her pieces range from intimate small-scale works to bold statement paintings. She served as the president of the Naperville Art League and taught a variety of art classes at North Central College continuing education, the Naperville Art League, and DuPage Art League. She also led the Art & Environment Committee for her church for over 10 years as well as designed large scale works for several churches across the US.

Dale earned a Certificate in Painting from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and is a Signature Member of the National Association of Women Artists. More at www.marilyndale.com

About Schoenherr Art Gallery/North Central College

The Schoenherr Art Gallery, located within North Central College's Wentz Concert Hall and Fine Arts Center in Naperville, IL, is a space dedicated to showcasing art from professional artists and traveling collections. It serves as an educational resource for both the college's students and the wider Naperville community. The gallery hosts a variety of exhibitions, often free and open to the public, and is also available for rentals when not in use for exhibitions.

North Central College is a private college in Naperville, Illinois. It is affiliated with the United Methodist Church and has 73 undergraduate majors of study, 17 minors, 25 graduate programs, and 4 certificate programs offered by four undergraduate colleges/schools and one School of Graduate and Professional Studies.