

2008-2009 PoconoArts MEMBERS' MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Now in its 34th year, PoconoArts continues to serve the artists, residents and visitors to the Pocono region. The following programs, services and events were the highlights of the last fiscal year.

- **PA PARTNERS IN THE ARTS** – This was the thirteenth year of participation in this program sponsored by the PA Council on the Arts (PCA). This year, \$24,127 was awarded to 28 organizations through the PPA project stream, and an additional \$11,821 to 8 organizations through the PPA program stream. Since its beginning, PoconoArts has awarded over \$530,000 through the program – all tax dollars coming back to our region for arts programming. Monroe county recipients of PPA Program Stream grants include COTA, ESU Community Dance Program; Pocono Bluegrass & Folk Society and the Pocono Choral Society. Monroe County Project Stream recipients include Diversity Arts; East Stroudsburg Area School District; Eastern Monroe Public Library; ESU Art Dept.; ESU Concert Choir; Fine Arts Discovery Series; Jacob Stroud Corporation; Kathy Kroll Dance & Paper Theater; Latino Task Force of Monroe County; Notre Dame High School; PA Rep Co; Pocono Dulcimer Club; Pocono Watercolor Assoc.; Pocono Youth Orchestra; Presbyterian Church of the Mountain; Quiet Valley; Trinity Centennial Band and the West End Park & Open Space Commission. Please visit our website for information on the grants and upcoming events sponsored by the program.
- **ARTS IN EDUCATION (AIE)** - PoconoArts offered four residencies this year through a regional AIE residency program from the PA Council on the Arts. This was a special year when the residencies reached pre-schoolers through senior citizens, showing the importance of the arts, and arts education, throughout our lives. Residencies were held at Resica Elementary School, Pen Argyl High School, the Hannig Children's Center at Northampton Community College-Monroe Campus and one is going on currently at Grace Park Senior Living. Special thanks to Target for granting us \$2000 towards educational programming last year.
- **STUDIO COURSES** –The goal of the PoconoArts studio program has always been to offer quality classes, with professional instructors, at a moderate price.
 - **PoconoArts Community Cultural Center** - Four course offerings - spring, summer, fall and winter – continue to bring quality art instruction to the region. This year, 23 classes/workshops servicing 105 students were held. If you have an idea for a workshop or class, please contact our Studio Coordinator, Carolyn Hetherington.
 - **Monroe County Parks & Recreation (MCPR)** – for the second year, classes were offered at the Monroe County Safety Center. While they were successful initially, attendance fell off this year leading to the cancellation of this partnership. MCPR will be taking a new direction in terms of their recreational services in the future.
 - **Monroe County Correctional Facility** - classes here are running smoothly with Will Daskal and Jasmine Abrams the current instructors.
- **STUDIO OUTREACH** – The year, PoconoArts, worked on several additional outreach educational programs in an effort to reach all areas and populations of the Pocono Region.
 - **Hamilton, Jackson, Pocono Township Open Space Commission** – in June, PoconoArts offered its first Summer Art Camp for 8-12 year olds at Mountinaview Park in Tannersville. Taught by Suzanne Werfelman, an art teacher in the Pleasant Valley School District, the one week day camp offered a different artistic medium each day and included sculpture, painting, and journaling. A second camp is planned for the

coming summer. Several adult classes were also scheduled for Mountainview Park that met with limited success.

- **Developmental Education Services (DES)** – funded through a grant from Sanofi Pasteur, through the generosity of their Director of Community Relations, Ellyn Schindler, classes for mentally challenged adults in the DES program began in September. The goal of the class was to provide not only socialization for the DES clients, but the opportunity to work on hand-eye coordination and small motor skills. The class is taught by Susan Field and the staff has come to love the two hours these students are at the council every Tuesday morning. It is the happiest time of the week for all of us.

- **Girl Scouts** – A partnership with the local Girl Scouts to provide three-hour workshops for girls working on a particular badge. Three workshops have been planned and we are hoping for a good working relationship that will provide services on a regular basis.

- **Clymer Library** – In an effort to reach out to the population in the Pocono Pines area, two adult classes were scheduled for this fall at the Clymer Library. While these classes did not fill, we hope to offer them again in the spring and begin to create a presence on the plateau.

- **Stroud Regional Open Space Commission** – A new collaborative effort began at the end of the fiscal year for classes at the Day Street community center in East Stroudsburg. Classes will begin in the spring and an arts enrichment camp is being planned for one week next August.

- **West End Park & Open Space Commission** – programs in the Chestnut Hill Township building in Brodheads ville are currently under discussion.

- **YOUTH OUTREACH**

- **Youth in Music Excellence Awards** for the 22nd year, PoconoArts sponsored this unique event that enables K-12 student musicians to perform in a recital at the Sherman Theater for scholarships. This year, 92 students participated in the event on March 14 and awards totaling \$2451 were granted. Winner of the Senior Instrumental Honor Award was David Lantz IV (now a student at Juilliard) and the Vocal Honor Award recipient was Faith Rivera. Evaluators for the event were local music educators Jim Daniels, Floyd Frisbie, and James Maroney. Special thanks to the Sherman Theater for providing this wonderful opportunity for student musicians.

- **High School Juried Exhibition 2009** – this was the 16th year for this exhibit that features the best in high school visual arts. Thirty-nine students participated in this year's show from Pocono Mountain East HS; Pocono Mountain West HS; Pleasant Valley HS; Notre Dame HS; Stroudsburg HS; and East Stroudsburg High School South. Best in Show winner was Alicia Chung from Pleasant Valley. This year's juror was Darlene Farris-LaBar, associate professor of art at East Stroudsburg University.

- **ARTSPACE** – the ARTSPACE Gallery underwent a major transformation during the last fiscal year. After over 15 years as a cooperative gallery, the members decided to disband and turn management of the gallery back to PoconoArts. During the transformation, several special shows were held including the annual Holiday Store in December and the High School Juried Exhibition mentioned above. In June, under the guidance of former ARTSPACE Director, Rich Spezzano, the gallery was changed into a PoconoArts public gallery, with all PoconoArts members invited to exhibit in the gallery for the months of June-November. Twenty-four artists signed on and exhibited their work in a greatly enhanced gallery that featured a new hanging system and flooring. Special thanks to PoconoArts' landlord Cecil Buchanan for installing the floor and the ESSA Bank & Trust Foundation for supporting the purchase of the hanging system.

- **SPRING FOR THE ARTS** – The first Spring for the Arts auction was held on Saturday, March 28. Twelve feature artists along with many additional artists, local businesses and arts patrons helped the council raise over \$12,000. Those present the evening of the event had a wonderful time. Next year's event is scheduled for March 27th. Special thanks to Joann Cartiglia and Lucille Morrow who were the true visionaries of the event and responsible for its success.
- **FESTIVALS** - The 5TH Annual Festival of Wood took place at Grey Towers National Historic Site on August 8 & 9. Twenty-four wood craftsmen participated in what has become a popular event in the Milford area. Two weeks later, the Pocono State Craft Festival returned for its second year to Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm. While Saturday's weather was less than perfect, the festival continues to be a signature summer arts event in the Poconos with 76 craftsmen participating. Neither festival would be possible without support from Lori McKean at Grey Towers and Joni Oye from the Pocono Chapter of the PA Guild of Craftsmen. Special thanks to Al Weichman who served as site manager for both festivals.
- **MEMBERSHIP** – Membership in PoconoArts was down somewhat this year – perhaps an indicator of the economic times we seem to find ourselves in these days. I encourage all members to invite their friends and family to join - the newsletter alone is worth the small membership fee and there are discounts to all PoconoArts paid events including studio classes and the Spring for the Arts ball. Also, don't forget the benefits of membership – If you have something to offer, please call Debbie and list it in the "Member Benefits" section of the newsletter. We are also happy to offer members a link on our website in exchange for a link on theirs. Please forward your website information to info@poconoarts.org
- **GOVERNMENT SUPPORT** – This year was a difficult one for the arts in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As we all know, the budget process took the entire summer to resolve, with the arts on the chopping block most of the time. The final outcome was positive and, while it sustained a loss, the PA Council on the Arts is still offering grant opportunities. This is especially important for those receiving grants through the PA Partners in the Arts program. From Harrisburg to Stroudsburg, we want to extend a special thank you to all who took the time to write their legislators about the importance of the arts and what they mean to our communities. If you have not done so already, please take a moment to thank those legislators for keeping the arts alive in PA. It looks like we might have a similar fight this year, so please keep those pens and computers ready.
- **FINANCES & LOCAL SUPPORT** – PoconoArts took some major steps over the past year to examine its expenses in an effort to maintain its programs and services during the difficult economic times. It is safe to say that where things could be cut, they were, and all surplus spending eliminated. The reverse of cutting expenses, of course, is raising income. An increase in income is certainly a goal for next year.
- **PUBLIC GALLERY SPACES** – This program continues to offer artwork to the community in a variety of settings. We currently have 12 public gallery spaces that are coordinated by an active committee. The committee is responsible for jurying in new artists, making sure the galleries are appropriate and maintained and overseeing the artists in the galleries. The committee is also responsible for planning and executing the annual Members' Exhibition.

- **ANNUAL MEMBERS' EXHIBITION** – Once again, this was held in May as the cornerstone to “May is Arts Council” month with 97 visual artists participating. Jurors for this year’s show were Nancy Bohm, Dr. Robert Morrow and Rocky Pinciotti. The opening of the show on May 16th featured PoconoArts Squared in the afternoon and Evening on Main, with its performing artists throughout downtown Stroudsburg, in the evening. We continued our parking meter bag competition which generated increased interest along Main Street.
- **WEBSITE & NEWSLETTER** – During the past year, PoconoArts truly took the leap to the super highway. Our website was enhanced and now has the capability to take memberships, class registrations and donations on line. For those who wish, newsletters, as well as event, advocacy and other information, is sent via email on a regular basis, keeping everyone up to date on regional and statewide art issues. We are consistently pleased with the statistics on the number of people who open their emails and even more pleased that they take action and/or pass information on to others. To enhance the flow of information, PoconoArts is now on Facebook and I encourage you to become a fan. Please remember that advertising and “stuffing” opportunities are available to get word of your event out to a specific arts audience through the newsletter and website. The deadline for information remains the 8th of the month prior to publication.
- **MARKETING** – The marketing committee continues to work on benefits for PoconoArts members and new and different ways to get the “word out.” Several local businesses have agreed on discounts for PoconoArts members and decals indicating this will be out shortly. New marketing opportunities via the PoconoArts website and Facebook are reaching out to a larger audience as mentioned above and the work of the marketing continues to be the greatest way to reach new members and patrons. Please join us on the Marketing committee which meets the first Tuesday of the month at 8am at the Pocono Arts Council office.
- **FUTURE PLANS**
 - **ART TOWN HALL MEETING** – If you are involved with an arts organization in any way, please mark your calendar for Wednesday, January 20, 2010 (snow date, January 27) for a Art Town Hall Meeting.
 - **SPRING FOR THE ARTS** - there are many opportunities available to participate in this year’s Spring for the Arts event. If you would like to be considered for one of 15 feature artists spots, please bring the piece of art you want to donate to the live auction at the event to the PoconoArts office by January 15. Those chosen by a jurying committee to be one of the feature artists will receive a one month, 2-3 person show in the new Studio Gallery at PoconoArts. Items are also needed for the silent auction and key boxes – especially artwork, gift certificates and gift items. Advertising opportunities are available in return for donations. Finally, if you like to party, join the planning committee and make this the best event in the area and by all means, put March 27th on your calendar and plan to attend. You will be in for a great evening in support of the arts.
 - **ART BY ME PARTIES** – this new fundraiser is for everyone who always wanted to paint, but never had the time to take a series of classes. In three hours, party-goers will create a painting ready to take home and frame. To enhanced the party atmosphere, the events are BYOB – please bring snacks and beverages to help you achieve your creative best. The first family party is schedule for Tuesday, December 29, 11am-2pm. Party-goers will be working on a painting of two horses. Another is being scheduled for January.

- **OFFICE STAFF** – Once again, our office staff remained constant this year. Special thanks to Debbie Frantz, Tassy Gilbert, Carolyn Hetherington, and Sandy Twiss. It is hard for people not involved in a non-profit office to understand how much there is to do and how many interruptions there can possibly be as work is being done. PoconoArts would not be what it is without the dedicated support of Deb, Tassy, Carolyn and Sandy.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

As Executive Director of PoconoArts, I want to thank all the members of the Board of Directors for their support over the past year and especially Mary Louise Parker who served her second and final year as board president. She now is able to claim that coveted title of Past President. It has been a true joy for me to work with her as she guided the council for the past two years. Also, thank you to all the volunteers, committee chairs and staff that make my job one of the best. Every day at PoconoArts is an adventure, with a challenge waiting around every corner. With your help, the 2009-2010 year will be our best ever.

Laura L. Goss, Executive Director

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