

**FISCAL YEAR - OCTOBER 1, 2020 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2021
ANNUAL REPORT - POCONO ARTS COUNCIL**

Now in its 46th year, Pocono Arts Council continues to serve the artists, residents and visitors to the Pocono region. The following programs, services and events were the highlights of this past year.



EXHIBITIONS/GALLERIES (339 pieces/173 artists)

- **Pocono Arts Council Exhibitions** – From Oct. 2020-Sep. 2021, Pocono Arts Council’s usual offering of themed exhibitions was hindered due to the COVID environment, however, we still offered exhibition opportunities, virtually and in-person with safety precautions. In response to the pandemic, we had to be thoughtful and creative with our programming. Typically, each show is judged for prizes by an artist or industry professional from outside the immediate area. Approximately \$175 in prizes are awarded, and we aim to find corporate sponsors to cover these exhibition expenses. John MacAllister, local artist and instructor, serves as our gallery curator, masterfully hanging each show. The following shows took place during this fiscal year: 1) **Annual Student Exhibition** for area K-12 students took place in the Community Gallery. 41 pieces of art were exhibited with an enthusiastic crowd on hand to celebrate our up-and-coming artists; 2) **“The Earth Speaks – A Juried Exhibition on the Environmental Crisis”** took place virtually and also in person at the Community Gallery during the month of April. This collaborative effort was a regional call (mid-Atlantic) for artists whose work speaks to environmental crises. 29 works by 23 artists were exhibited with opportunities to sell their work online. Co-sponsor of this event is longtime member Mark Lichty and Artists4Earth coordinators, Renard Cohen and Brian Van Korn; 3) **Members’ Exhibitions:** Two Members’ exhibitions were held in FY 2020-21 during October and May. 49 pieces were exhibited in October 2020 and 73 pieces were exhibited in May 2021. The best of show winners were Tracy Granger of East Stroudsburg (Oct) for her fiber piece entitled “Auditioning the Stash” and Bev Abel (May) for her oil painting entitled “Three Sunflowers.” In October, prizes in every category were awarded by judges Cindy Vojnovic and Lisa Kovacs, and in May, prizes were awarded by judges Sharon Cosgrove, Earl Lehman, and Joshua Miller. The winning entries were moved to the Eastern Monroe Public Library; 4) **Fiber Arts Only** was held in June/July. In August, the community gallery transitioned for Fall for The Arts auction preview.
- **Public Galleries** – Eight participating galleries throughout Monroe County provide member artists the opportunity to showcase their work throughout the year at various business locations. Exhibitions run for two months: 1) **Better Homes and Gardens/Wilkins and Associates;** 2) **Eastern Monroe Public Library, Stroudsburg;** 3) **610 Main Street Window, Stroudsburg;** 4) **Middle Smithfield Township Community and Cultural Center;** 5) **Office of State Rep. Maureen Madden;** 6) **Office of State Sen. Mario Scavello;** 7) **Pocono Eye Associates;** and 8) **Yetter Family Art Gallery/Pocono Cinema & Cultural Center.** We thank Annette Atkinson and welcome Middle Smithfield Township as the latest addition to the public gallery list. Throughout the year, artists also have the opportunity to participate in shows at **The Dunning Gallery at NCC Monroe Campus.** The following exhibitions were held in public galleries this year: Winter Wonderland at Pocono Cinema in Dec. 2020; the Butterfly Exhibition in partnership with Women’s Resources at Pocono Cinema in Aug./Sept. 2021; East Stroudsburg Borough’s 150th Anniversary Exhibition at the Dansbury Depot in May/June 2021; “Images of Our Flag,” coupled with Laurinda Faye’s “Victory in the Pacific” at Middle Smithfield Community and Cultural Center in July 2020; Black History Month in the Main Street Window in Feb. 2021, followed by the Pocono Photo

Club in April, “Kaleidoscope” in June, and Jack Swersie’s “Robots Gone Wild” in Aug. The Pocono State Craft Festival and Fall for the Arts fundraisers were featured in the window from Sept-present. If members are interested in exhibiting or other businesses are interested in becoming a “public gallery,” e-mail director@poconoarts.org.

- **NEW! Holiday Store at Olde Engine Works** – In December 2020, we formed a new partnership with Norman Fayne and Rex Hughes at the Olde Engine Works Marketplace, 62 N. 3rd St., Stroudsburg. Our traditional “holiday store,” featuring fine art and fine crafts by member artists, was reimagined and moved to booth #A100. This location provided a great “no fuss, no muss” selling opportunity for our member artists.

SCHOLARSHIPS

- **Suzanne Anderson Scholarship for Visual & Performing Arts Students** – Two \$500 scholarships were granted in May 2021, through a bequest of the late Suzanne Anderson, to one Visual and one Performing Arts high school senior with who intend to further their education in the arts. The 2021 scholarship awardees were **Ryan Anderson** of Pleasant Valley High School and **Katherine Hess** of East Stroudsburg North High School. Scholarships were not presented in 2020 due to Covid-19, and so a third scholarship was awarded to “Poetry Out Loud” finalist **Taha Vahanvaty** of Stroudsburg High School.

SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

During FY 2020-2021, plans were instituted for a new initiative, the “**Every Brilliant Thing**” project, a suicide awareness and prevention play. The production launched at East Stroudsburg University on Oct. 25, 2021. The goal for this project was to pilot this production in the region with the end goal of having an “out of the box” ready production that we can offer throughout Pennsylvania through partnerships with PA Council on the Arts and area mental health professionals. We will be seeking grants from the PA Council on the arts for 2022 to help sustain the project. Expenses associated with the project are: paying actor/stage manager, purchase of rights to produce, venue rentals, etc. You can read more about it here: <https://poconoarts.org/every-brilliant-thing/>. Sponsors were East Stroudsburg University, Northeast Suicide Prevention Initiative, The Cooperage, Sanofi-Pasteur, Lehigh Valley Health Network, and PA Council on the Arts.

FUNDRAISERS & EVENTS

- **Mac & Cheese Bake-Off.** This annual fundraiser, coordinated with Britton Detrick at The Renegade Winery in Stroudsburg, was CANCELLED in November 2020 due to gathering restrictions.
- **Spring for the Arts Live Event.** The 13th annual Spring for the Arts event in May 2021 was POSTPONED in favor of a Fall for the Arts Live Event scheduled to take place in the new fiscal year, October 2021, at Stroudsmoor Country Inn. Due to low ticket sales, this event was also CANCELLED and fundraising efforts focused on the Online Auction and Raffle Ticket sales for the new 2021-2022 fiscal year.
- **17th Annual Festival of Wood** was CANCELLED for a second year in August 2021 due to a change in leadership at the Forest Service. We anticipate the return of this very successful festival in 2022 and hope that the grant from the Forest Service will be honored.
- **35th Annual Pocono State Craft Festival** was held Aug. 28-29, 2021. Although participation amongst craftspeople was down by 12 booths, 1,800 guests attended over the two-day event and festival proceeds were level to the 2019 show. Special thanks to **Joni Oye, Paul & Amanda Reiche**, and **Helen & Al Weichman** from the Pocono

Chapter of the PA Guild of Craftsmen, and to **Tiffany Black** and the staff and volunteers at Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm for their assistance with the show and for the problem-solving involved after a hiatus in 2020.

- **Downtown Stroudsburg Activities** – Pocono Arts Council volunteers and board members provide assistance and volunteers for many downtown Stroudsburg events, including Winterfest, First Saturday Art Walks, Halloween Along Main/Spooky Stroudsburg, Stroudfest, etc.

MEMBERSHIP

- **Membership is the most important income stream and budget-sustainer at the Pocono Arts Council.** A Membership Drive took place in May 2021, and as a result, 116 members joined, renewed or upgraded their membership. Overall, membership in the Pocono Arts Council stands at 334 active members. We populated our online Arts Directory, providing member artists the opportunity to create their own directory listing to publicize their business and their work. Membership funds pay the overhead to keep the arts council in operation. We encourage all members to invite their friends and family to join. The website and e-newsletter alone are worth the small membership fee, and there are discounts to all members on exhibition entry fees. If you are a current member, please pay attention to the e-mail renewals you receive. We need your financial support to keep our doors open. In 2015, we began a sustaining membership program where you may contribute a specified amount each month. Several members take advantage of this program, and it is very helpful to us. Remember, a big benefit of your membership is to be listed in our online Arts Directory, including your website and social media accounts. Be sure to follow the Pocono Arts Council on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and please share arts-related events with your family and friends. It's easy to join or renew your membership online at poconarts.org.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING COLLABORATIONS

- In February 2020, the board of directors set a goal to build community relationships in 2020-2021. A new vision statement was adopted in February 2020 which in part states “our vision for the future includes forging and strengthening new and existing partnerships within the community and across other arts organizations.” Although the pandemic impacted our partnerships with Grey Towers National Historic Site (Festival of Wood August 2021), Renegade Winery (Mac & Cheese Bake-off November 2020), and Stroudsmoor Country Inn (Spring for the Arts May 2021), we remain optimistic that our events will resume in the near future. Thank you to Hamilton Township, Paradise Township and Delaware Water Gap Borough for direct financial support. These local entities regularly support the council with a yearly donation. Membership dollars continue as the bread and butter of our financial sustainability, thank you. Since 2019, we have partnered with:

Adams Outdoor
Artists4Earth
Brodhead Watershed Association
East Stroudsburg Borough
East Stroudsburg University
Farm Arts Collective in Wayne County
Go Collaborative
Lockwood Properties
Middle Smithfield Township
Monroe County Drug and Alcohol Commission

Monroe County Historical Association
Monroe County Drug and Alcohol Commission
NCC-Monroe Campus
National Association of Mental Illness
Olde Engine Works Marketplace
Pocono Cinema & Cultural Center
Pocono Mountain Visitor's Bureau
Pocono Township
Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm
Rebel Stages

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

- During FY 2020-21, Pocono Arts Council received increased support through the PA Council on the Arts, totaling \$26,000. The board of directors has voted to earmark funds for microgrants in our local community for arts projects. The application will be available in Dec. 2021 for projects to begin in 2022. In previous years, we received \$3,000. Federal COVID grants totaled \$32,700. PoconoArts continued to receive funds from several local municipalities (\$2,000) and the Monroe County Commissioners (\$20,000), including the continued lease of office space at 701 Main Street for a period of up to one year; and month-to-month following the completion of the lease in March of 2021. One of the best ways to keep up-to-date with what is going on in Harrisburg is to join Citizens for the Arts, the state-wide advocacy group that monitors arts support. By joining Citizens and monitoring their emails & website, you will have the most up to date means for arts advocacy. PoconoArts is an active member and participates regularly with calls for action. Although Pocono Art Council ceased to be the granting partner for Project Stream and Program Stream grants through PA Partners in the Arts (PPA), our Monroe County artists and arts organizations are still eligible to apply through the new partner, Lehigh Valley Community Foundation. To apply for a grant, visit www.arts.pa.gov.

FINANCES & CORPORATE SUPPORT

- Pocono Arts Council must increase its efforts to gain revenue through corporate donations and sponsorships and community grants. Due to the cancellation of fundraisers and events that typically result in corporate support, corporate support lagged during 2020-2021. Oftentimes, corporate support monies can be used to cover office overhead. Increasing our corporate asks will be a goal for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. Businesses may support Pocono Arts Council in a number of ways: through various membership levels, sponsorships of our Exhibitions and Events, or community foundation grants.
- Legacy Gifts – the Pocono Arts Council was a benefactor of a legacy gift made by Myra Kyle. If you would like to remember the Pocono Arts Council in your estate planning, please contact director@poconoarts.org.

MARKETING & OUTREACH

- **Website** – Thanks to Darice Pauselius of Full Cup Co, the council has a fully interactive website, www.poconoarts.org. In 2021, our staff was trained on website management, updated the member Arts Directory and Arts Calendars. We encourage members and friends to interact with the website to explore Arts Opportunities. Logos for corporate and municipal sponsors scroll across the bottom of the screen giving organizations extra value for their support of the Pocono Arts Council.
- **E-newsletter** – Our “Arts News” e-newsletter is emailed to a growing distribution list (5,000) on the first of every month through the MailChimp communications platform. We are exploring an advertising opportunity for members to run their business card in the e-newsletter for only \$25/month. The e-newsletter is also shared to an additional audience of 5,000 contacts on our social media pages (see below).
- **Social Media** – Pocono Arts Council maintains a social media presence throughout the year on Facebook (3,326 followers) an increase of 55%, from 2020, Instagram (1,516

followers) an increase of 34% from 2020 and Twitter (240 followers). Please make sure to follow what is going on!

OFFICE STAFF

Thank you to Tassy Gilbert, Community Engagement Coordinator, for membership, marketing, and administrative duties in the office and to Judy Moeller, our bookkeeper. John MacAllister continues to act as our gallery curator for larger shows. PoconoArts appreciates the dedicated support of our staff and dedicated board members and volunteers.

STRATEGIC PLANNING/SUCCESSION PLANNING

- Our last board retreat was held in June of 2019. At that time, the Board of Directors adopted a new vision statement that is forward-looking and focuses on embracing and choosing change. Plans for another strategic planning session are in the works for January 2022 to map out a 3-5-year succession plan for the Pocono Arts Council.

Pocono Arts Council Vision Statement for the Future

The future of the Pocono Arts Council will build on our past strengths: local knowledge and connections; an enduring passion and commitment to the arts; and an inclusive membership model that embraces artists and art lovers of all ages and abilities.

Importantly, our vision is forward looking and will embrace and choose change over attempting to repeat “the way things always have been done.” In order to broaden and strengthen our leadership, we will build our board capacity by inviting different individuals with vocations and skill sets (such as legal or IT). We will explore new revenue options, such as those provided by grants and sponsorship. We will also look to close our technology gap – building a model that connects people to the arts and builds arts-driven communities through technology rather than an outdated (and expensive) brick & mortar model.

To this end, the Pocono Arts Council will be a true community organization, with meetings and opportunities held throughout our service area. The PAC is excited to be more nimble, responsive to change, and eager and able to seek out new opportunities. Our vision for the future includes forging and strengthening new and existing partnerships within the community and across other arts organizations. We will seek to build a social support network for both individuals and groups, both online and on ground to connect artists and art lovers on the web and to invite access and meet-ups in person as well. The Pocono Arts Council will serve as a hub that gathers and collects information and events in a single, easy-to-use space online: connecting artists and fostering collaboration; organizing outings, experiences, and salon-like gatherings; developing opportunities for arts education while also spotlighting existing educational options within the community; and creating spaces across the community in galleries, businesses, schools, and community spaces and buildings to feature the visual and performing arts.

Written by Pocono Arts Council VP Thomas O'Connor, Adopted February 2020

ENDNOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

My sincerest appreciation extends to all serving board members, and especially to outgoing board members **Jim Evanisko**, **Thomas O'Connor**, and **Jody Singer** for their support and service over the years - especially during the unusual social climate of 2020-2021. We have not closed our doors, programming has pivoted but not stalled, and we are poised to position ourselves for the future. If the past two years have taught us anything, we have proven that

we can be nimble, operate on a shoestring, and become creative in our approach. As we enter into the fourth year under my leadership, I'm reflecting on the words directly from the 2020 vision statement: "our vision is forward looking and will embrace and choose change over attempting to repeat the way things always have been done." Thank you for joining me on the journey. As we know, the arts touch all our lives at many levels. It is time for all of us to continue to join together and move forward. ***Culture Creates Community!***

Susan Randall, Executive Director, director@poconoarts.org

2020-2021 Corporate, Individual and Government Sponsors

Diamond (\$5000+)

Estate of Suzanne Anderson
Estate of Myra Kyle
ESSA Bank & Trust
Monroe County Commissioners
PA Council on the Arts

Platinum (\$2500+)

Stone, Boylan & Assoc. Inc.*

Gold (\$1000+)

The Lester G. Abeloff Foundation
Lehigh Valley Health Network
Robert M. Moses
Sanofi Pasteur
WSBG/Seven Mountains Media*

Silver (\$500+)

Barley Creek, Trip Ruvane
The Cooperage *
William & Barbara Cramer
Cramer, Swetz McManus & Jordan
East Stroudsburg University/Smith McFarland Theater*
Julie Golin
Mark & Wendy Lichty
Raymond Miller & Rich Spezzano
Northeast Suicide Prevention Initiative
PA Guild of Craftsmen - Pocono Chapter
Renegade Winery - Britton Detrick
William Siegfried-Stockbridge
Out on a Limb Tree Service LLC
John M. Yetter

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Roy Hubbard
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Betsy Buzzelli-Clarke
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