



Artists' Weekend Scheduled for June 23-25

Plans for the 2023 Artists Weekend are in full swing. This popular outdoor painting event made a comeback in 2022. While the event will still feature the opportunity for local and regional artists to enjoy the rural countryside beauty of Highland on their own schedule, a few new options have been added for this year.

For those interested in coming a little early, the Highland Arts Academy has added a new workshop, *Getting Started Using Acrylic Paints*. This workshop is not limited only to Artists' Weekend registrants, but has been designed to cover the basics of composition, canvas preparation, and planning a painting for aspiring artists, or folks new to acrylics. Local artist, Karen Milnes, will lead the workshop from 5 – 8 pm on Thursday evening, June 22 in the freshly renovated *The Third Space* at 132 Main St. To register, visit www.highlandartsacademy.com

By request, the Arts Council has gained permission from property owners for artists to access a new set of scenic locations around the county. Starting Friday, registrants will pick up their pre-ordered box lunches and directions to these new locations and head out to paint.

This year the Saturday night dinner is replaced by a Sunday Brunch. This will allow the artists to paint later on Saturday evening, enjoying the changing light and different perspective it offers, while preserving the opportunity for artists to meet with other artists.

The culmination of the weekend is the Wet Paint Show and Sale. It is a highlight for both artists and local residents on Sunday afternoon, the 25th. Paintings completed during the weekend will be on display for the public at the Highland Center from 2 pm – 4 pm. This is a great chance to meet the artist and buy paintings of the county directly from them.

For more information and registration for the weekend, visit www.highlandcountyartscouncil.org

IN THIS ISSUE

Artists' Weekend

Grant News

Young String Players

Scholarships

Taking A Break In
June

Creativity Corner

...and more!

Take note

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Exciting Grant News

The Highland County Arts Council could not provide many of the events and activities held throughout the year without the help and support of our members, Foundations, and grants. We received news this month of two new grants that will help us meet our 2023 goals.

The Highland Tourism Council Marketing Assistance Grant will provide marketing funds for the promotion and growth of Artists' Weekend. The funds will be used to spread the word about the scenic beauty of Highland and increase the participation in 2023. They will also be used to document this year's activities to be utilized in future promotions so this event can continue to grow and reach its potential as a major attraction in Highland.

The Highland County Arts Council partnered with the Highland Historical Society, Program for Aging Services, and Highland Children's House in an application to the Youth Philanthropy Council for funds to launch a new initiative in Highland. The project will be modeled after StoryCorp and stories from local residents will be recorded for generations to enjoy. Watch for more information on this exciting opportunity to share our history with each other.

Grants are an important part of the financial health of many local organizations. The work of dedicated volunteers to write and implement these grants should not be taken lightly. Thank you to our talented grant writers and members for the hard work and dedication of time it takes to be successful in our financial future.

HIGHLAND COUNTY ARTS COUNCIL

Awards Two Scholarships to Arts Students from Highland County

Graduating senior, Camryn Carpenter, has been awarded a \$500 scholarship to attend Liberty University next fall with a major in Graphic Design. When asked how she became interested in this field of work, Camryn replied, "I got into art at a young age but never really tried to improve until I was in 9th grade. It was then that I really became interested in the arts and started drawing every day to improve. My favorite thing to draw is stylized people, in other words, cartoonish people. My favorite medium is watercolor because it is what I have been using ever since the 9th grade and it is easy for me to use. I plan on attending Liberty University in hopes of pursuing a degree in Fine Arts. After that I hope to get a job as a visual developer, or concept artist, in a studio such as Disney or DreamWorks. I also hope to someday go into business for myself, making my own artworks and merchandise. I'll have to see where life takes me." Camryn has studied art with Renee Vandevander, the art teacher at the Highland County Public Schools.



Seventh grader, Karl Sax, was awarded a \$365 scholarship to attend the Messiah University Orchestra Camp in July. At the camp, Karl will play in a junior high orchestra and will get to work with a bass teacher in a master class of other bass students. In addition, Karl will be assigned to a chamber music ensemble and will take a musicianship class. Karl has been studying the string bass since he was in third grade. He studies with Gretta Sandberg from the Allegheny Mountain String Project and is a member of the Allegheny Mountain String Orchestra, also under the direction of Ms. Sandberg. In addition, Karl studies with Sam Suggs, Assistant Professor of Bass at James Madison University. When Karl was asked how he was drawn to the string bass, he replied, "It was the biggest instrument and could play loud! I like playing in the orchestra because the bass always has one great tune in at least one of the orchestra pieces. Also, playing in a group is fun as nobody notices if you miss a note!"

Congratulations to these two students as they pursue their dreams!





Allegheny Mountain String Project

The Allegheny Mountain String Project (AMSP) held its annual Spring Concert at the Garth Newel Music Center in Warm Springs, VA, on Sunday, May 21. Over 50 young string players participated in the concert.

A highlight of the concert was the involvement of many new string players who this past year have been taking beginner string classes conducted in Clifton Forge, Covington, Millboro Springs and at Garth Newel in Warm Springs. The group classes were taught by two AMSP alumni, Julia Villegas and Madison Barnett.

The May 21 concert also featured chamber music ensembles and the Allegheny Mountain String Orchestra. The finale of the program was a well-loved song, *I'll Fly Away*, played by all the young musicians, including the beginner players!

The AMSP, now in its 13th year, provides first-class string instruction and musical ensemble experience to young people in Alleghany, Bath and Highland Counties and beyond. The program was co-founded in 2010 by Jaime McArdle, AMSP program director & instructor, and Gretta Sandberg, AMSP orchestra director & instructor. The AMSP is part of the educational programs sponsored by the Garth Newel Music Center.

This summer, beginner classes will be held by AMSP in two locations. In Highland County, there will be two beginner classes and two classes for experienced players will be held at the Highland Co. Public Schools in Monterey (one for strings and one for winds) taught by Ms. Sandberg and Ashlyn Senger, the Highland Public Schools band director. The dates are July 25 – 28, with a performance at the Highland Farmer's Market on Friday, July 28. In Bath County, a string workshop will be held at the Garth Newel Music Center on August 2-5 with renowned string pedagogist, Pam Wiley, from Charleston, SC.



The Gallery of Highland

TAKING A BREAK

The Highland County Arts Council learned in May that the musicians for the Second Saturday @ Seven in June were unable to perform the concert scheduled in the Jones House garden. With the realization that the same weekend is graduation at the Highland Schools, the Council decided to take a break and reschedule the concert in honor of the McCoy Sisters for August.

The Highland Center hosted a spring reception at The Gallery of Highland on the afternoon of Sunday, May 21. The Gallery of Highland was conceived by Highland Center board member and artist, Bonnie Baxley, and officially opened in July 2021. It is a permanent gallery inside The Highland Center where local artists and authors can display and sell their work. The work of more than 20 local artists are currently featured and includes paintings, prints, pottery, stained glass, basketry, books, and more.

Artwork in The Gallery of Highland is refreshed seasonally and is revealed at opening reception events. The next gallery reception is scheduled for Friday, September 1st.

Creativity Corner

Jim Sherman

Jim Sherman, a new member of the Arts Council, retired in 2017 and moved into the house that he and his children had built in the Little Egypt area of Highland Co. His first project was to “finish” the house (is any owner-built house ever finished?). Since he has always enjoyed woodworking and had a shop full of tools, he then began to make furniture for his many children and grandchildren. He has primarily used lumber found or cut on his property, made into slabs by local bandsaw mills, dried in a “solar kiln” over his workshop, and turned into dimensional lumber in his shop. The requests from his family have mostly been tables (dining, side, coffee), desks, kitchen islands and storage cabinets. Jim has made extensive use of epoxy to turn lumber from “that is only good for the furnace” into “one-of-a-kind” art. He feels that his job is to highlight the character of the lumber, using the cracks, knots, twisted grain, spalting, and even rotten areas, taking what initially looks like very low grade lumber into interesting and unique pieces. Jim would be the first to say that he is not a true craftsman, there are many aspects of fine woodworking that are beyond him. But he is inventive, open to new ideas, and willing to bring creativity to his furniture.

Epoxy is a two part resin that is extremely temperature sensitive, can have hardening times from 5 minutes to 3 days, is relatively expensive and is very “sticky”. The epoxy Jim uses cannot be “poured” more than 1/4 inch deep, making it necessary to do multiple pours to fill deep voids. Once it is fully cured, it is completely non-toxic and is food safe. It is a remarkable material, but is difficult to use. There are many tutorials on YouTube about how to use it. That is where Jim started.

Another aspect of Jim’s work is seen in a couple of the photos. It is the “lightning” pattern burned into the wood. This is a “Lichtenburg burn” done using a very high voltage device that Jim made. While the patterns it creates certainly add interest, it requires extreme caution as it can be quite dangerous.

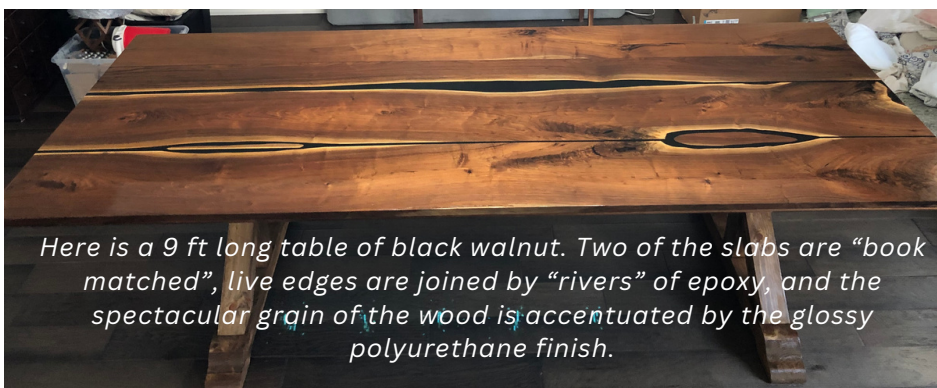
The above photo is a side table top made from rotten sugar maple. The voids were cleaned out and filled with epoxy tinted black or untinted. There are areas where you can look through the epoxy and see the floor beneath the table top. The concept in this piece is storm clouds with lightning coming from them. There are quite interesting, almost iridescent, wood patterns in some areas, accentuated by the “bar-top” finish.



Above is a side table made from black walnut. Again, the voids are filled with black epoxy and the Lichtenburg burn was done to “tie” the two filled areas. The top finish is 15 coats of glossy polyurethane (final few coats highly diluted).



This is a grandchild’s desk, the top of which is spalted hickory. This desk features a burned “rosette” and a live edge front. The bench is also hickory.



Here is a 9 ft long table of black walnut. Two of the slabs are “book matched”, live edges are joined by “rivers” of epoxy, and the spectacular grain of the wood is accentuated by the glossy polyurethane finish.

THANK YOU



Without the support of the following organizations, the Highland County Arts Council would not be able to provide the programming that is its hallmark.

The Virginia Commission for the Arts The National Endowment for the Arts
The Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge
The Little Swiss Fund The Charles Pinckney Jones Foundation

