

Seventy-Five Years of Creativity Celebrated By Westfield Art Association

By MICHELLE H. LePOIDEVIN
Specially Written for This Is Westfield

In 1922, the Westfield Art Association (WAA), began as a group of artists supporting one another by providing quality programs and exhibitions of their work. Since then, they have created a significant forum for honoring local talent.



PROUD PASTEL PIECE...S. Allyn Schaeffer of Fanwood stands proudly beside his pastel piece, entitled "First Night."

The original group of avid artists gathered in the Wateunk Room of the Westfield Municipal Building. This room, which at that time served as a teen center, was located under the Community Room.

WAA members now convene on Sundays in the Westfield Community Room, which is handicapped accessible, for meetings and an artist's demonstration. All meetings and exhibits are free and open to the public.

Barbara Schwinn, President of the WAA, stated, "The artists demonstrate their expertise in a variety of media — both local artists and well-known artists."

"Many of our members exhibit statewide and have won national, state and local awards," she added.

A member of the Board of Directors of the Westfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Ms. Schwinn said the WAA is continually "trying to foster new and ingenious programs to bring our art into the center of town."

"We've had exhibits in store windows," she noted.

Artwork has also been lent to the Spanish Tavern and Children's Specialized

Hospital, both in Mountainside, as well as to the Town Book Store in Westfield as a part of the WAA's "loan shows" program.

Ms. Schwinn noted that the Town Book Store on East Broad Street offers a showcase for local artists and authors to present their work to the community.

Three times a year, store owners Grace and Dean Roth have sponsored the WAA's "Meet the Artists Night," during which members of the public have an opportunity to meet various artists.

"That's the kind of book store they wanted to have when they opened," stated Ms. Schwinn. "Our artists regularly show their work in small exhibits, and portfolio work is for sale" she added.

"The first event of Artslink was 'Artists Celebrate Westfield' and was held last May to bring art and artists into in the central business district," Ms. Schwinn explained. The event also includes musical and theatrical performers "in an effort to bring an appreciation of all the arts to the community," she said.

The WAA President noted that Dr. Theodore K. Schlosberg, founder and Executive Director of the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts, was a strong supporter in the formation of a Westfield Arts Commission. "The Commission, an umbrella organization known as Artslink, is co-chaired by Ms. Schwinn and Carolyn Klinger-Kueter.

The WAA also offers a Landscape Painting Group, which provides artists with an opportunity to paint local landmarks in outdoor locations.

The Westfield Figure Drawing Group, which sketches models, meets on Thursday mornings in the Westfield Community Room from 10 a.m. to noon.

"We look forward to bringing all the arts together for the new millennium," revealed Ms. Schwinn.

There are approximately 300 members in the organization, according to its President. One-third are from Westfield, while the other two thirds come from surrounding communities.

Upcoming Sunday programs will include "Jane Annis: Images in Watercolor" on May 16, and "Four Artists in Four Media" on June 13.

Calendars should also be marked for the 75th Annual Members' Watercolor, Graphics and Photography Show in the Westfield Community Room from Saturday, through Tuesday, April 17 to 20.

Another show, which will commemorate the 75th anniversary, will be held in the fall. Both events will feature awards for outstanding artists.

In addition, the WAA Sidewalk Art Show and Sale, which has been in existence for over 50 years, will be held on Saturday, May 22.



CONTRIBUTING TALENT...Linda Kolar, a Westfield resident, has contributed her talent to the Westfield Art Association with her oil painting, "Birdhouses."

New Jersey Workshop for the Arts: A Limitless Palette For Everyone

By MICHELLE H. LePOIDEVIN
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Although most people believe that some of the most valuable instruction and cultivation of creativity can only come from a large institution in cities such as New York and Boston, The New Jersey Workshop for the Arts (NJWA) has proven for over 25 years that home can be where the art is.

"It's like a miniature arts center here," Dr. Theodore K. Schlosberg, Director of the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts told *This Is Westfield*, of the East Broad Street cultural mecca that was established in 1971 in Westfield.

Since its inception, NJWA has provided outstanding creative outlets for children and their families, such as The Music Studio, The Westfield Fencing Club, The Westfield Art Gallery, and the Kids 'N' Arts and Tots 'N' Arts programs.

The Music Studio has offered private, one-on-one lessons in the fall, spring and summer seasons for strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, piano, guitar and voice. The Studio's students have offered recitals and special performances throughout each year.

"Melody Makers," a senior citizens music workshop, as well as a jazz band and chamber orchestra have been shining examples of programs at The Music Studio.

All Saints Church is the practicing center for the Fencing Club, which is offered to students from 10 years of age to adult and provides private lessons for beginner and advanced pupils.

While the program supplies all of the necessary equipment, lessons also feature instruction in sabre, foil, and epee styles of fencing.

The Tots 'N' Arts and Kids 'N' Arts pre-school programs teach students the value of music, movement and drama. Children from age 18-36 months, with the accompaniment of an adult,



SWEET MELODIES...Kirsty Mitchell receives a lesson from Dr. Theodore K. Schlosberg during a violin lesson.

may participate in Tots 'N' Arts.

The Kids 'N' Arts program is offered to children from three to four years of age. The two programs are held at the NJWA office and are comprised of four sessions each during the school year.

"This sets the seeds for what these various art forms can offer. It gives them exposure (to these art forms)," Dr. Schlosberg stated.

Local artists are given the opportunity to exhibit their artistic flavor and flair through the Westfield Art Gallery, which changes its exhibition on a monthly basis. The gallery is housed inside the NJWA office.

During the steamy summer months, the Edison Intermediate School is the home of the Westfield Summer Workshop, a cool and creative haven for children to hone their interests in music, drama, dance, fine arts and creative writing.

The program attracts New Jersey students from pre-school to ninth grade. Some of the past highlighted course offerings have included, "Needlework," "Jazzy Jewelry," "Stamp Art," "Coffee House," "French," "Signing for Fun," "Story Stretchers," "Fencing I," and "Introduction to Band."

Dr. Schlosberg reported that approximately 27 to 28 teachers are responsible for invigorating and inspiring the students at the NJWA.

He added that instructors take time to make certain that music lessons are specially crafted to fit the individual talents, goals and needs of each pupil.

Dr. Schlosberg stressed the necessity of complete family involvement in the programs, which NJWA can offer. He labeled this immersion as "bathing in the arts together."

He stated that approximately 1,000 individuals, including parents and students enter the doors of the NJWA office each week, seeking instruction and the ability to expand their talents.

"Parents secure a way for children to experience what is important in living in a community that gives them pride and a feeling of warmth," Dr. Schlosberg explained.

He stated that with the building located in the heart of Westfield, former students find their way back to the open doors of NJWA, whether it is seeking further assistance or simply to say thank you for their experience with the Workshop.

Dr. Schlosberg stated that he hopes the traditions and programs featured in NJWA will be his legacy to Westfield and the surrounding communities.

While maintaining that NJWA is a place where former residents and students attribute their creative talents and skills, Dr. Schlosberg concluded, "Here is a haven. Come back here if you need us."



TICKLING THE IVORIES...David Umansky plays some tunes during a lesson with Olga Slavnina, piano teacher at The Music Studio of the New Jersey Workshop for the Arts.



How to Get Involved:
New Jersey Workshop for the Arts
(908) 789-9696 njwa@westfieldnj.com

THE NEW JERSEY WORKSHOP FOR THE ARTS

A nonprofit organization established in 1972.



152 East Broad Street
Westfield, NJ 07090
(908) 789-9696
www.westfieldnj.com/njwa

The Music Studio

Instrumental and voice classes for all ages and skill levels.

Kids 'N' Arts

Classes for children three to five years old.

Tots 'N' Arts

Half-hour classes for children 18 months to three years with guardian.

Westfield Fencing Club

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Westfield Summer Workshop

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How to Get Involved:

Westfield Art Association (908) 232-2599 waa@westfieldnj.com

The Westfield Art Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing artists and the community an opportunity to learn about many aspects of fine art. Since 1922 the group perpetuates an outstanding tradition of quality member exhibitions and programs.

Artists share their styles and expertise in a variety of media such as: oil, pastel, acrylic, sculpture, watercolor, graphics, photography, drawing, collage, printmaking, and mixed media.

Artistic pursuits are shared through the Landscape Group, Contemporary Art Group, and the Westfield Figure Drawing Group. Meetings are free, open to the public, and handicapped accessible.

For further information contact:
Westfield Art Association, Jane Annis, Membership
(908)-232-3381 • P.O. Box 874, Westfield, N.J. 07091.

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