The Arts in Wetzel and Tyler Counties

The Arts Matter

“...the nurturing of creativity comes into play in everything from world diplomacy to world economics, business endeavors to social endeavors, and everything in between...In all its forms, art plays a critical role in finding our way as people and as a culture.” Robert Redford.

An arts center is not just a building—it is a garden where imagination is grown, where beauty is celebrated, where creativity is prized.

A community is not just people, business and jobs—it is an environment where children learn to expand their minds, where adults express their dreams, where life is in Technicolor, not black and white. It’s a place where people want to live and where businesses want to settle.

ArtsLink Makes a Difference

ArtsLink, the arts council of Wetzel and Tyler Counties, is attracting members and support for its efforts to encourage the development of the arts in the two counties. In three short years, the organization has grown to 160 members. With membership continuing to grow.

In its first three years, ArtsLink has produced a variety of activities and provided support to others. Examples include “Arts in the Park,” the annual Independence Day event in Bruce Park, “Jazz at the Library,” an annual five-concert series, a regranting program that financed a mural on Main Street in Paden City, art classes for disadvantaged children at the Wetzel County Center for Children, knitting classes for children, an annual Broadway tribute for Valentine’s Day, art and photography exhibits, bus trips to Pittsburgh and New York to see Broadway shows, and coffeehouse events for local musicians.

ArtsLink is home to Art Talk, a discussion group; the Stitching Sisters, a quilting group, and Children’s Theater rehearsals.

Funding these activities, as well as development of the art center, is a challenge. Opportunities for funding of arts activities are many and varied; however, they all have one thing in common: they require matching funds.

ArtsLink is seeking local support for both program development and facility improvements at the Francis Creative Arts Center. The Francis Center has been enjoying limited use already; however, accessibility to state funding requires that it be made universally accessible. This will require capital outlays for universal access to bathroom facilities and access to the second floor.
ArtsLink Needs You
The Francis Center

The Francis Creative Arts Center is located in the former Brennan and Francis Law Offices building on the corner of Maple Avenue and Washington Street in New Martinsville. The building was donated to West Virginia Northern Community College by Jack S. Francis. An all-steel beam and brick structure, the Francis Center is an ideal location for a creative arts center. ArtsLink operates the building under a memorandum of understanding with WVNCC.

Events

Events scheduled over the next six months include a five-event concert series featuring the West Virginia Dance Company and two returning favorites: Concert pianist Robert J. Thomas and the Trillium Piano Trio. Other events will include “Arts in the Park,” the Coffeehouse series, a Children’s Theater production and short term classes and workshops.

An Invitation

The board of directors of Artslink invites artists and arts groups to seek affiliation with the arts council. The 15-member board, with representatives from both counties, wants to assist them by offering a location for their activities, promotion of their efforts and assistance in seeking funds. ArtsLink welcomes partnerships with other organizations for the benefit of everyone in Wetzel and Tyler Counties.

Hub of Artistic Activity

Since the emergence of ArtsLink, support for the arts has been refreshingly enthusiastic. Key to sustaining this support is the establishment of a home, a center for arts activities that will foster classes, meeting places, a resource library and an events venue. Currently, arts activities sponsored by Artslink are held in churches, schools and libraries. The Francis Center hosts meetings and small activities. In order to utilize the facility to its maximum potential, ArtsLink is mandated to achieve universal accessibility.

This means a lift to the second floor and a bathroom that is handicapped-accessible. The WV Commission on the Arts has awarded ArtsLink a $50,000 matching grant to make these improvements.

The center will have a music room, studios, classrooms and a meeting room. A regular schedule of art, music and other creative disciplines is being developed. A functioning art center will allow ArtsLink to greatly expand its offerings for children.
Show your support
for the Arts!
If you wish, you may earmark your donation for the programs, the Francis Center or for the
general fund.

Levels of Giving
Patrons of the arts deserve to be celebrated. Gold, silver, and bronze supporters will be honored in
a plaque at the Francis Center and all donations will receive a personal acknowledgement.

Gold Patrons $1,000 + ______
Silver Patron 500 ______
Bronze Patron 250 ______
Others ______

Every donation is appreciated. Every gift, no matter the size, helps us reach our goal.

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Name
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Address
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e-mail address

Mail your donations to:

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