

November 15, 2021

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

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We are thrilled to share that the **Arts Alliance of Greater Waynesboro** is nearing its 10th anniversary! Back in 2012, the prospects for success looked bleak. Our goal was to help revitalize our downtown by bringing people together and stimulating new business through promoting the arts. Launching our **Destination ARTS!** initiative in 2013, we converted empty buildings into art galleries and featured live music up and down Main Street with the help of a passionate, dedicated team of volunteers.

Today, our downtown boasts numerous arts venues, including fine art galleries, artisan and antique stores, a ceramic arts center, an artist studio, a music center, a dance school, and a music school. Hundreds of artists and thousands of pieces of art have been displayed over the years, and hundreds of music and performing arts events have been presented. Waynesboro is now recognized as a town that encourages and supports the arts.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic hit us hard.

These past two years, we have been challenged to continue our mission while also striving to keep our community safe. And we are very proud that we are still here, moving forward and sharing the arts.



We stayed open for a majority of the pandemic, adapting to various mandates and evaluating local health outlooks to promote a safe environment for our volunteers, musicians, artists, and community as a whole. **Live Music Fridays**, which showcase local musicians, continue every Friday, and several **art show opening receptions** for **Gallery 50** have been celebrated with great success. **Songwriters Forum** has returned to **Music Makers** after adapting with Zoom and outdoor meetings. And nine beginner photographers participated in two **Intro to Photography** class offerings over the summer.

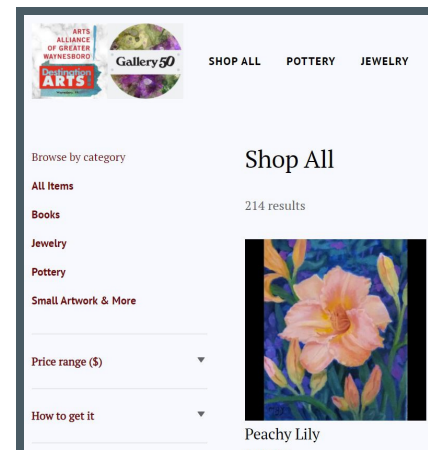


Outside of our own spaces, we have been taking advantage of Waynesboro's vibrant Main Street Park for many activities. Several Live Music Fridays have been held there to safely accommodate listeners. Despite the rain, our 2021 **Jammin' in the Park** event showcased nine local bands, four food trucks, and many art vendors for a jam-packed day celebrating local art. Twelve area singer-songwriters shared original music in the park for our free **Local Original Music Day** event. And in partnership with Mainstreet Waynesboro, **Food Truck Fridays** and the **Summer Concert Series** provided great opportunities for people to come together and enjoy local music while also promoting our great downtown area and its businesses.

On top of in-person events, we maintain an active social media presence and send weekly eblasts to share news of all the exciting arts happenings around town. Last year, we even started an online shop for Gallery 50, giving people the opportunity to browse and purchase over 350 works of art and handcrafted items. And by the end of this year, we hope to launch a new website that better showcases our mission and the progress we have made.

Truly, we stand proud, knowing we have come a long way.

Despite the pandemic, we are doing well and look forward to the future of the arts in Waynesboro, especially as we move ahead into safer times.



Since we launched our Destination ARTS! programs, other organizations have joined us in our revitalization efforts. The town has grown in exciting ways, with craft breweries, a distillery, Main Street Park, a growing number of high-quality restaurants, a coffee shop, a book store—and new businesses opening as we speak. We admire their own efforts in keeping our community safe, and we are grateful for your support of local businesses during these times.

We are blown away by our own successes and that of many other area businesses and organizations—it is such a remarkable accomplishment for our growing town. **And none of that would be possible without support from people like you!** We are lucky to be part of a community that sees value in the arts, which is evident by the classes that sell out, the successful turnouts at new art exhibit receptions, the sales of local artwork, and the attendance at live, local music performances.

But if we are to continue connecting our community through the arts, we need your help!

Most of our programs are offered free of charge, and much of the work is done by our dedicated team of volunteers. However, we still have expenses, including rent and overhead for our buildings, musician and artist fees, insurance, and marketing and promotion costs.

With **Giving Tuesday** just around the corner on **November 30**, we invite you to join us in keeping the arts alive in our community by making a contribution to the Arts Alliance of Greater Waynesboro. Help us put Waynesboro on the map as a destination for the arts!

We look forward to hearing from you soon and to seeing you at our events. We wish you and your family a safe and joyous holiday season.



Thank you for your generosity and support!

Monica Strong

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Board President

Andrew Sussman

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AAGW Founder & Board Vice President