



Artwork by Barbara Williams

# WINDHAM REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL ARTSPECTRUM

Volume #67 Issue #3 Fall 2024

*Promoting the arts in Windham and surrounding regions.*

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## WRAC Board Members

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## Message from the President

A fond hello to all our members and friends. I hope you had an enjoyable and restful summer. It was the first weekend in June when we launched the summer season with a very successful members

art show and reception at the ECSU library. Later in June, we welcomed the Windham Concert Band to the Shaboo Stage, followed by another concert in July with the Little Big Band. Both concerts were free and open to the public, and it was great to see such a large and appreciative audience for each concert. We are already making plans for more concert opportunities in 2025.

In August, we presented a themed member art show at Windham Hospital, "Seeing Red". All the work in the show featured the color "red", and it was great to see the large array of crimson, like barns, flowers, furniture and umbrellas. I wish to thank the members of the board of directors who gave their time to help with these summertime events.

In this issue of Art Spectrum, you will read about the many events and opportunities we are working on for the 2024 – 2025 program year. With great anticipation, I am looking forward to the upcoming Young Artists Music Competition. I wish to thank Carol Twardowski-Heap and the entire competition committee for their dedicated work as they put together another great event, now in its 38th year!

Lastly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to you, our members who have made WRAC the successful organization that it is. Please reach out to us with your ideas, announcements, or projects you are working on. We love to hear from you. I wish you all a happy and healthy autumn season.

*Cathy Shires, WRAC President*



We are happy to announce the WRAC in collaboration with the Friends of the Jonathan Trumbull Library will be sponsoring the 25th Annual Equinox and the Arts Show at the Jonathan Trumbull

Library on the Lebanon Green, opening with an artists reception on Friday, March 21, 2025 at 7 p.m. The show will run for three weeks. The WRAC will be sending out a call to artists early in 2025 for art submissions. Watch for further information as it becomes available.



**TAKE NOTE! A CAPPELLA  
CONCERT BENEFITS  
PROJECT IMO  
LOCAL BASE CAMP TEEN  
CENTER**

MANSFIELD — A concert by Take Note! a cappella ensemble will benefit a local organization, Project Imo, a youth development and outdoor education charity serving the communities of eastern Connecticut. Take Note! performs Sunday, December 8, at 3:00 p.m., at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, 27 Plains Road, Windham Center, CT. The concert features songs of the holiday and winter season in various musical styles, including jazz, traditional, and multicultural.

Tax deductible donations will be accepted at the door and will benefit the programs of Project Imo.

Project Imo hosts their "Base Camp" Teen Center in downtown Willimantic. From Base Camp, youth from the region are empowered to explore new life journeys through leadership and career development workshops, outdoor and adventure programs such as camping and cycling, individualized mentoring, arts and media creation, a manufacturing and technology maker space, and more. For more information, visit <https://projectimo.org>.

Take Note! is a 20-voice a cappella ensemble based in Mansfield, comprised of select, talented, local singers from diverse backgrounds who enjoy challenging, diverse musical styles. Under the artistic direction of Linda Tracy, Take Note! performs without charge for the benefit of other nonprofit organizations. The ensemble's mission statement expresses its vision well: "Through performances in support of charitable endeavors, we are raising spirits, raising voices, raising hope."

For more information,  
visit [www.take-note.org](http://www.take-note.org), email [take-note@earthlink.net](mailto:take-note@earthlink.net), or call (860) 228-2390.



**Continues its Fall Season  
THE VANILLA BEAN CAFÉ  
November 23, 2024**

Poets at Large will continue their fall series on Nov. 23rd at The Vanilla Bean Café, 450 Deerfield Road, Pomfret, CT. The featured performer will be Massachusetts Lifetime Beat Poet Laureate and musician Tommy Twilite.

Twilite is a troubadour who combines music, poetry, exploration and adventure into his performances. He is the co-founder and director of the Florence Poets Society and the host of the Twilite Poetry Pub on WXOJ Valley Free Radio. His latest chapbook, "Kills No Bird" is a follow up to his 2021 collection, "Fifty Words for Rain".



Tommy Twilite is well known as someone who can transport an audience to another realm with his words and music. He was recently honored by the National Baseball Poetry Festival for his poem, "The Tools of Ignorance." Tommy is the editor of Silkworm, an annual review, and is a Lifetime Beat Poet Laureate. He believes poetry and song can renew the Earth.

These Saturday evenings of spoken word and poetry are from 7-9 p.m. Admission is \$15.00 and includes a give-away.

Poets at Large is a regional group of poets who read in CT and MA, now in its fifth year. Contact Poets at Large coordinator Karen Warinsky if you are interested in reading in the open mic at [karen.warinsky@gmail.com](mailto:karen.warinsky@gmail.com). There is a 5-minute limit for open mic readers. These events are recommended for ages 14 and up.

Poets at Large is a project of Windham Arts. The Vanilla Bean is ADA compliant.



# Call for Entries & Upcoming Exhibits

Here is a very incomplete list of upcoming exhibits to see or that you might want to submit your work. If you know of any other upcoming events please email Trish Fabish - ftwart@gmail.com so we can spread the word. Next newsletter is published in February 2025.



**13<sup>th</sup> Annual Photo Exhibit**  
Submission deadline Dec. 27, 2024  
Visit **ARTCENTEREAST.org**



Entry to 2024 Exhibits are closed  
Visit **lymeartassociation.org** for all  
the 2025 Exhibition deadlines



Annual Art Show  
Nov. 7 - Dec. 7, 2024  
Visit **granbylandtrust.org**

**CAFA+**

Submission deadline past  
**UNCERTAINTY**  
Show Nov. 2 - Dec. 7 2024  
Visit **ctacademy.org**



**Weir Farm National Historic Park**  
**Apply to be an Artist-in-Residence**

The open call for Weir Farm's 2025  
Artist-in-Residence program is open now  
through January 31, 2025.

Visit Weir Farm National Historical Park  
on line to apply.



Artists' Open Studios of  
Northeastern CT will be held  
Friday, Saturday and Sunday  
**November 29, 30 & Dec 1<sup>st</sup>**  
**2025** and Saturday and  
Sunday, **December 7 and 8**  
from **10 am to 5 pm** each day.



The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Equinox and  
the Arts Show  
will return to JTL in  
**March 2025**  
*Watch for further information as it  
becomes available.*

# Check Your Coins and Plan a Visit to Weir Farm National Historical Park



*Julian Alden Weir  
(1852-1919)  
As the father of  
American Impressionism,  
Weir used new,  
international ideas about  
painting to change  
American art.*

Established in 1990, Weir Farm National Historical Park is located in Ridgefield and Wilton, Connecticut. Weir Farm is the only national park site dedicated to American painting. It commemorates the life and work of American impressionist painter J. Alden Weir, his daughter, Dorothy Weir Young and her husband, Mahonri Young, and later, Sperry and Doris Andrews. Other artists who stayed at the site or lived there, include Childe Hassam, Albert Pinkham Ryder, John Singer Sargent, and John Twachtman. In 1991, Eastern Connecticut State University Professor and WRAC member Andy Jones was awarded an Artist-in-Residency from the Weir Farm Trust. His 1998 pen & ink drawing of an oak tree, derived from one of his Connecticut landscape paintings, was selected as the winning design for the U.S. Mint Quarter Competition for the State of CT.

Weir Farm National Historic Site is located on 735 Nod Hill Road in Wilton, CT. The visitor center is open 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday from January through March, and 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Thursday-Sunday from April through December. The grounds are open all year from dawn to dusk. Park entrance and programs are free. Guests can visit more than 250 painting sites, sharing the same vantage point as the artists.



*2020 coin was designed  
to honor Connecticut  
arts & the Weir Farm  
National Historic Site.  
It was designed by  
Justen Kunz of Utah  
and sculpted by  
Phebe Hemphill of  
Pennsylvania.*

presents.....

# The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Young Artist Music Competition

This year's event takes place on **Saturday, January 25, 2025 at 1:00 pm**  
(**Snow date Saturday, February 8, 2025 at 1:00pm**) at  
The Burton Leavitt Theatre  
779 Main Street, Willimantic, CT.

While music touches the lives of each of us, there are those who choose to study music and learn to sing and/or play an instrument. Studying music is a very complex and arduous journey. It is an art form that requires great effort, tenacity, perseverance, and endurance. There are victories and struggles along the journey that sculpt and inspire.

Each year, children around the world begin to study music. However, only those with a true fire and passion will aspire to reach and achieve a level of excellence. For this reason, the Windham Regional Arts Council remains committed to hosting competition for young artists.

Over the past 38 years, the music competition is one of the largest events that WRAC organizes. We take great pride in showcasing our dedicated students in this forum. We believe we are affording them several opportunities:

- For our younger students in grades 7-9, this may be the only place outside of studio recitals where they can gain experience in performing and/or gain confidence to perform.
- Undoubtedly, **every** student of music has spent countless hours in a practice room. This competition gives them a "why" and a reason to invest their time.
- We award not only cash prizes to those that place in the competition; but also, we have **special awards for excellence in voice, piano, wind, string, and a community service award.**

The funding for all of our awards is through dedicated individuals, their families and organizations who hold a passion for music. They want to insure that young artists can continue to pursue and be recognized for their accomplishments.

- Each year, we award a concerto prize to one student. With this honor, they **may** be offered the opportunity to be invited to do a solo performance with the Willimantic Orchestra.
- **We offer an ensemble division for 2-5 players.** This may include vocalists and/or instrumentalists. Students who are a part of an ensemble may also compete as a soloist.
- Finally, we strive to present a forum worthy of those wishing to pursue music as a vocation.

As we open this year's competition season, our committee is pleased to present to you some exciting changes and updates:

- After many requests from parents, voice teachers and students, **the vocal division is now expanded to include students in grades 7-9.** Students in grades 7-9 and 10-12 will compete separately.

## Mr. D Scholarship Award

In memory of Ed Di Giovanni, a lifelong musician, music educator, WRAC board member, and competition adjudicator, his family has dedicated all donations in his name to WRAC. Through the generous support of family, friends, and organizations this award is presented to a

student in grade 7-9 for excellence on a band instrument or piano. **For the first time in the history of the competition, there is a prize solely dedicated to the middle school division.**

### **The Feather Spearman Honor**

This award was created in honor of Feather Spearman, our previous competition director. Feather served for 20 plus years and continues to avail herself to us as we move forward. As director, WRAC treasurer and board member, **Feather is the epitome of community service.** The honor is given to one student each year who has utilized their talent and love of music to serve their community, a non-profit organization, a school, a faith based organization, health care facility, etc. **This honor is the only award that is not performance based.** However, it is presented at the competition. If you know a student that has shared their talent and love of music, please encourage them to apply.

### **Updated listing of all of the honors and prizes available:**

We award up to 3 places for each division

- Concerto Prize
- Bellingham Piano Prize
- Gerry String Prize
- Gerry Wind Prize
- McDevitt Voice Prize
- Mr. D Scholarship Award
- Feather Spearman Honor

**Registration is now open for this year's competition until January 15, 2025. Please visit our website at [www.windhamrac.org](http://www.windhamrac.org) to see the guidelines, and to register.**

If you have any questions, you may contact us.

Our email is: [contactus@windhamrac.org](mailto:contactus@windhamrac.org)

Carol Twardowski-Heap, Competition director 860-933-8015

Cathy Shires, WRAC President 860-617-4951

The committee is once again looking forward to the competition. Please consider attending even if you do not know anyone competing. You will enjoy watching and hearing many beautiful pieces of music played or sung.

**See you on January 25, 2025**

## **WANTED:**

### **Your Unused Band Instrument**

WRAC is very pleased to announce the inauguration of our Instrument Donation Program, and we are seeking your help. Perhaps you have an unused but working instrument tucked away in a closet or attic?

We are aware of the many students in the community who would love to learn to play an instrument, are unable to afford the cost of purchasing or renting. WRAC is building an inventory of used instruments, and in partnership with local music teachers, will finalize the donation of the desired instrument.

Due to storage limitations, we are seeking donations of strictly wind and percussion instruments.

Instruments that need minor restoration will be accepted. **We are also seeking services from anyone who has expertise in restoration and repair of brass and woodwind instruments.**

If you have an instrument to donate, or if you can help with repairs, please email us at [contactus@windhamrac.org](mailto:contactus@windhamrac.org) or call Cathy Shires at (860) 423-1728




## WRAC's New Board Member – Melanie Noble

Melanie Noble recently joined the WRAC board and is excited to dive into the WRAC annual Young Artists program. She's passionate about helping young performers experience the excitement of performing on a stage, while building their confidence in a supportive, community-based setting that hopefully eases some of those pre-performance butterflies.

Melanie keeps busy with her own music as well. After a decades-long break, she returned to the flute and piano and has enjoyed reconnecting with the local arts scene. She plays flute in two local concert bands - one of which she also serves on the board for. A few years ago, she decided to try something new and picked up a bass guitar. Now, she plays her bass several times a year for a local community theatre as well.

Melanie also enjoys hiking, reading, and staying connected with her large family, which includes her husband and son in Mansfield, her daughter in Colorado, and her parents and many siblings and their families.

Professionally, Melanie works in marketing and communications at UConn's Office of the Vice President for Research. She is delighted to be part of WRAC and looks forward to contributing to the arts in the community. 



## In Memoriam



### **Fleur Lawrence 1939 – 2024**

With sadness, we learned of the passing of Fleur Lawrence, former president and co-founder of the Windham Regional Arts Council. Fleur and her late husband Jerry resided in Windham for many years. In addition to her community volunteerism, she was also the director of the Mt. Hope Montessori School and operated her own antique shop. We owe a deep gratitude to Fleur, for without her, it is likely WRAC would have never existed. Per her obituary, Fleur's family requests donations in her memory be made to the Fleur and Jerry Lawrence Endowed Scholarship at UConn, or the Florence Griswold Museum.

### **Dr. James (Jim) Lacey**

We learned of the passing of Dr. James Lacey on August 28, 2024. Jim and Barbara have been loyal members of WRAC for many years. A native New Yorker, Jim brought his family to Eastern Connecticut to assume his position on the faculty of Eastern Connecticut State College (now University). At Eastern, he initiated the American Studies program, chaired the English Department, and during his last ten years, he directed the Honors program. For several years, Jim and Barbara would generously open their home for the WRAC Mystery Dinner fund-raising event. We extend our condolences to Barbara and the Lacey family at this difficult time. To quote his own words from his obituary: *"I am indeed fortunate to have shared with a loving wife and family so much joy during our brief sojourn together under the sun."*





**WRAC invites you to join or renew your membership and receive the ArtSpectrum**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (H/C) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Categories (circle one):** New / Renewal

(check one) \$15 (individual) \_\_\_\_ \$20 (Family) \_\_\_\_ \$100 (Group) \_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Your area of artistic skill (circle one):** Visual Art / Music / Writing / Drama / Dance

**Your donation helps WRAC continue to promote the arts in the Windham and surrounding regions. If you wish to help promote the arts further, please consider enhancing your membership to one of the following levels:**

(check one) Benefactor \$100 \_\_\_\_ Patron \$50 \_\_\_\_ Donor \$30 \_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to the Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) and mail to  
P.O.Box 847, Willimantic, CT 06226**



## Bus Transportation Fund is Open for 2024 – 2025 School Year

**Calling all teachers, parents and school administrators:**



Now that the school year is in full swing, we hope you will consider field trip opportunities to arts-related venues, museums and performing arts centers for your students. For the past 17 years, WRAC has proudly offered to assist with the high cost of transportation for students, teachers and chaperones to these locations.

In recent years, students from grades 3 – 12 have enjoyed visiting various locations such as the Wadsworth Atheneum, the Connecticut State Capitol, the Loos Center for Performing Arts, and the Garde Arts Center. In each of these cases, WRAC was able to pay for the full cost of the transport. Not sure what events or sites to attend? We are happy to help with suggestions.

Please email us at [contactus@windhamrac.org](mailto:contactus@windhamrac.org) or click on the "Contact" link on our website, [windhamrac.org](http://windhamrac.org)

## Open Artist Studio – Join Us!

Are you a beginner or experienced artist looking for a creative community? Join us for a fun and social evening of art at the Buchanan Center at the Mansfield Library! Bring your own art supplies and work on your projects alongside other artists. All skill levels welcome!

**When:** Mondays, 5-7 PM (depending on library availability)

**Where:** Buchanan Center, Mansfield Library

**Cost: FREE!**

For the upcoming monthly schedule: Email Lorraine Williams at [Iszymko198@yahoo.com](mailto:Iszymko198@yahoo.com)  
Come create, connect, and get inspired!





P.O. Box 847  
Willimantic, CT 06226



*Has your membership expired?* ▼



Any member who would like to receive the ArtSpectrum (in color) via email, please send your request to [Contactus@windhamrac.org](mailto:Contactus@windhamrac.org)

## Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery

*Upcoming shows at the  
Windham Hospital Gallery will feature:*

- November:** Nancy Bergeron - watercolors  
Cindy Carey - metal art
- December:** WRAC - Small & Affordable Show
- Jan. 2025:** Cathy Shires - mixed media  
Xiahhong Song - acrylics
- March:** Charles McCaughtry - watercolors  
Scott Rhoades - acrylics
- April:** WRAC theme - "Bee Kind"
- May:** Lorraine DuBois - photography

*We do have the months of February, June, July, Sept. and November open for any artist or artists who would like to exhibit their work (solo or shared). Please contact Micky Welles at (860) 617-3855*



**Note:** A new procedure has been implemented whereby the artist will be notified when a piece of art has been sold, giving the artist the option to replace the sold art with another for the duration of their exhibit.

**MUSIC**  
to Warm the Heart  
**WINTER CONCERT**  
to benefit Project Imo  
Sunday, December 8, 2024  
3:00 p.m.  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
27 Plains Road  
Windham Center, CT  
DONATIONS  
gratefully accepted at the door  
**Take Note!**  
a cappella ensemble  
projectimo.org take-note.org