Greetings to all of our WRAC members and friends. I am very happy to report that our 2019 – 2020 program year is off to a great start. Thanks to our dedicated board, we hosted two events already.

On September 28, we hosted a demonstration, featuring Karen Israel. Karen is an award-winning pastel artist and the current president of the Connecticut Pastel Society. Attendees were able to watch as she developed a beautiful floral still life. In this issue, you will see that we are featuring another demonstration on November 9 by another highly regarded artist, Charles Mc Caultry. These events are free and open to the public, thanks to the memorial gift of our former board member, Lydia Rudolph. Always an eager and inquisitive learner, we wanted to honor Lydia in a way we know she would approve by sharing love and learning of art with others.

On October 5, we again hosted the annual Autumn Artisans Fair at the Mansfield Library. We were fortunate to have good weather and a steady stream of visitors. We are very grateful to all the vendors who helped make this a successful event. Special gratitude goes to the staff of the Mansfield Library for their steadfast support.

We are looking forward to hosting more events before the close of 2019. These include the art show at the East Brook Mall gallery in November, the “Small & Affordable” art sale at Windham Hospital for the month of December, and our 34th annual Young Artists Music Competition, which will take place on December 1st. A music stand was purchased by the WRAC Executive Board along with other donors from Hickeys of Ithaca, NY in memory of Catherine Wade. The stand will be used during the Young Artists Music Competition at the Burton Leviton Theater.

I hope you will take the time to visit as many of these events as possible. I would like to extend all of our members my sincere appreciation for your steadfast support of your local Arts Council.
Upcoming art exhibits at the Windham Hospital Gallery include:

**October** – Blanche Serban and Sara Makosky (*oils, acrylics, and ink*)
**November** – Julie Caprera (*oils and acrylics*)
**December** – WRAC Member Theme Show – “Small and Affordable Art”
  *Watch for registration coming in the mail*
**January** – To Be Determined

Members who schedule a solo or group show are now asked to submit a short bio or artist’s statement one month before their show’s opening to allow time to get publicity in place. The hospital will give the artist’s show publicity in the Chronicle, online, and in their newsletter: Hospital, hoping to reach a wider public. These bios should be sent to contactus@windhamrac.org.

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Our annual Artisan Fair was held on Saturday, Oct. 5 at the Buchanan Library in Mansfield. Eleven talented artisans displayed their work, some of which included jewelry making, fabric art, photography, and paintings.

Pastel artist Karen Israel performed a two-hour demonstration on September 28th before a group of curious attendees in the Buchanan Center of the Mansfield Library. Using a limited palate of soft pastels, Ms. Israel created a floral still life from a photo subject. Many in attendance never worked in pastels. Others were familiar with the medium and wanted to observe an accomplished pastel artist at work. Karen is a nationally recognized award winning pastelist who is affiliated with many prestigious art organizations and clubs.

Together with the Coventry Arts Guild, WRAC will co-host another art demonstration by well-known watercolorist Charles McCaughtry. This event will be held on Saturday November 9th at 1:00, at the Mill Brook Place, 1267 Main Street, Coventry. Charles will share his techniques in developing his beautiful atmospheric paintings. A lover of fishing and the natural world, water is frequently featured in his work, as well as masterful portrayal of light and shadow. We encourage everyone who has an interest in art, from beginners to the experienced, to attend this free demonstration. Mill Brook Place is located directly across from the Bidwell Tavern. Enter the driveway and proceed to the building at the rear of the property. Ample parking is available. To assure seating arrangements, attendees are encouraged to pre-register by calling Cathy at (860) 423-1728 or email contactus@windhamrac.org

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Coventry Arts Guild had their 4th annual members show at the Windham Hospital Gallery in July. It featured a diverse group representing landscape, portrait and figurative painting, watercolor illustration, calligraphy and varied approaches to photography. Artists included: Roberta Bates, Lorrie Funk, Aline Hoffman, Kathleen Lepak, Sue Muldoon, Jane Penfield, Scott Rhoades, Joanne Sibicky, Catherine Shires, Barbara Timberman, Irina Tzraskos and Richard White.
Geeta Pfau is a resident of Mansfield and has served on WRAC’s board of directors for the past three years. In her nursing career, she served as a nurse at Eastern Connecticut State University. However, her service in the health care field stretches well beyond the university setting. In her native Nepal, Geeta trained as a nurse and served as a midwife. She completed her Ph.D. at the University of Connecticut, specializing in community medicine, medical anthropology, and health education.

In preparation for the writing of her book Crowning: True Stories of Birthing and Women in Nepal (Ant Press, 2019) Geeta worked for over 30 years as a global health consultant, teaching, and researching around the world. She has served as a health educator and trainer of nurses and birth attendants in Africa and Nepal.

The book is a collection of true stories that Geeta collected for two decades with her older sister Chanchala, who worked through the mid-20th century as midwife in Nepal. In the book’s preface, Geeta wrote, “This book presents descriptions of many home deliveries, including the birthing of twins and triplets, through the personal stories of mothers, physicians, nurses, midwives, co-workers, patients and families served by Chanchala and Geeta. The stories are personal and sensitive, often joyful but sometimes sad. Until now, many have been hidden, untold aspects of the lives of real Nepali girls, women and their families. At times, the secrets, agonies and fears various individuals and families were forced to keep and live with were daunting. Each family had its own dignity, pride, privilege, status, fear, shame, secrets, grief and disasters, which were seldom revealed or discussed, or spoken about.”

This book reveals the times and culture of an Asian land-locked nation, which still had a monarchy. There are riveting stories of contrast between the poor and the privileged, and how these women were able to serve both classes in a democratic way.

We congratulate Geeta on the book’s success. Crowning is available on Amazon in both print and digital formats.

Hello WRAC membership! I have been enjoying serving on our board and joined so as to take part in a beneficial community organization and to connect to our region’s arts community.

I have been thinking about the networking potential in our membership so we can connect to each other as well as folks outside of WRAC. I am figuring out how to create a directory that could be on our website and/or facebook page. This would be optional to those members who want to participate and they could have their contact info, description of their work, and, (a) photo(s) of their work, and/or a head shot. Anyone out there with experience with creating such a directory, I'm open to advice!

Please contact Tom thru email at tom@thpstudio.com.
We are now accepting registrations for the Young Artists Music Competition, which will take place on Sunday, December 1, 2019 at 1:00 at the Burton Leavitt Theater, Willimantic.

This event is open to students in grades 7 – 12 who live or attend musical instruction in the greater Windham area. Competitors may compete in piano, stringed or wind instruments. The vocal category is limited to students in grades 9 – 12. Upon determination of the judging panel, cash awards will be distributed to the highest performing competitors in each age group and instrument group. The best overall performer will be offered the opportunity to perform as a guest soloist with the Willimantic Orchestra in its Winter concert on March 1, 2020.

Registration forms can be downloaded from the Windham Regional Arts Council website, www.windhamrac.org or by calling Cathy Shires, at (860) 423-1728. The general public is invited to attend the competition and witness the amazing wealth of talent among these young performers.

The Windham Regional Arts Council donated a new framed poster to the Windham Middle School as we have in the past. Art teacher Kathleen Brillon had suggested four artists that would make a nice addition to those that are already installed. WRAC members Claudette Marshall and Trish Fabish looked at works by the different artist and chose Faith Ringgold. She is an African-American painter, sculptor, writer and activist who tells her story by making quilts. She is still living and got her fabric training from her mother who was a fashion designer in New York. Faith became an artist for the same reason she became a writer “I wanted to tell my story”.

The print was matted and framed by Claudette Marshall owner of CADMarshall Framing - 34 North Street, Willimantic, CT 860- 617-5422
We invite you to join or renew your membership to the WRAC and receive the *ArtSpectrum*

Name ____________________________________________
Address ____________________________________________
Town ____________________________ Zip Code __________
Phone (H/C) ____________________________________________ Email ____________________________

Membership Category: □ New □ Renewal □ Date ____________________________

□ $15 (Individual) □ $20 (Family) □ $30 (Donor) □ $50 (Patron) □ $100 (Benefactor)

Do you have an area of artist skill? □ Visual Art □ Music □ Writing □ Drama □ Dance

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

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**the Gallery**

at the East Brook Mall

Presents

“the Incredible 4”

November 8, 2019

Come see an incredible side by side combination of some of Connecticut’s finest artists and our future leaders.

North Windham Elementary School

WRAC Windham Regional Arts Council

Eastford School

Free Reception with Refreshments

November 8th 2019

Time: 6 pm - 7 pm
Any member who would like to receive WRAC info by email should send your request to Contactus@windhamrac.com

Please check membership expiration

The Windham Regional Arts Council

The Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) was founded in 1983 to help organize community arts activities for the 50th birthday of the city of Willimantic. The Council is a non-profit volunteer organization with over 250 members. The ArtSpectrum is published three times a year and highlights art events and people actively involved in the arts community.

The organization financially supports the Willimantic Orchestra and the Burton Leavitt Theater. It sponsors an annual art show for member artists. April, Aug., and Dec. feature a group show at the Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery. Each month a different member artist exhibits at the Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery. Each year the Council holds a juried music competition for students aged twelve to eighteen and the overall winner performs a solo at the Willimantic Orchestra’s spring concert.

We welcome new members and creative ideas to promote the arts in Willimantic and surrounding regions.