



Westchester Library System and Lifetime Arts, Inc. Announce Creative Aging Program Grant Winners

County libraries and artists collaborate on projects for older adults with Creative Aging in Our Communities: The Westchester Libraries Project

Westchester County, NY (December 7, 2009) – The Westchester Library System (WLS), in partnership with Lifetime Arts, Inc., recently named ten Westchester County libraries as grant recipients in its arts program, *Creative Aging in Our Communities: The Westchester Libraries Project*. Funded by the Helen Andrus Benedict Foundation, the grants support collaborations between county libraries and professional teaching artists to develop and implement instructional programs that promote creativity in older adults and provide opportunities for meaningful social engagement.

“The *Creative Aging* program, now in its second year, provides older adults with a unique outlet to express themselves artistically in the comfort of their own local library,” said Terry Kirchner, Executive Director of the Westchester Library System. “Many of last year’s participants joined the program without prior experience creating art and blew us away with their accomplishments. We anticipate more wonderful results in the coming year.”

At each library, projects will culminate in either a public exhibition or performance. Most workshops begin in January 2010 and run through late winter or early spring, depending on the location. Andrus on Hudson will host an encore event in June 2010 that will showcase works from the participating libraries.

Funded programs, which are free to participants, represent a wide range of offerings:

Bedford Free Library The Art of Drawing

The fundamentals of drawing using pencil, charcoal, pen, and ink will be taught during this ten week series. The drawing skills of beginning and intermediate artists will be developed with an emphasis on the historic architecture in the village of Bedford.

Workshop Dates: January – March 2010

Art Partner: Mark Cassata

Contact: Ann Cloonan, Library Director, (914) 234-3570 or www.bedfordfreelibrary.org

Eastchester Public Library Learn to Become a Singing Sensation

Both novice and experienced singers will learn techniques and skills to help them sing with passion and energy. Duets, solos, and group opportunities will provide a collegial and inspiring experience for all participants.

Workshop Dates: February – April 2010

Art Partner: Eric Jennings

Contact: Tracy Wright, Library Director, (914) 721-8100 or www.eastchesterlibrary.org

Mount Vernon Public Library Senior Theatrical Project (STP)

Working and learning together, Mount Vernon’s seniors will script, stage, and perform a musical based on their collective interests and passions. With instruction in a variety of art forms, including dancing, acting, and singing, everyone will play a part.

Workshop Dates: March – May 2010

Art Partner: Leona Heyward Hull

Contact: Karen Preuss, Assistant Library Director, (914) 668-1840 x221 or www.mountvernonpubliclibrary.org

North Salem (Ruth Keeler Memorial Library)**Altered Books – Visual Memories**

Co-sponsored with the North Salem Senior Citizens, this workshop series will enable participants to create personalized visual memoirs using altered books – which are recycled, discarded books that are reworked using a variety of visual art techniques and materials.

Workshop Dates: March – April 2010

Art Partner: Maggie Zander

Contact: Carolyn Reznick, Library Director, (914) 669-5161 or

www.ruthkeelermemoriallibrary.org

Peekskill (The Field Library)**Collaborative Mural Project**

Bringing older adults together with experienced, mature local artists, this series of nine workshops will engage participants in expressive interpretation through the creation of a large public mural on a Peekskill-specific theme to be determined by participants' interests.

Workshop Dates: March – April 2010

Arts Partner: Larry D'Amico and Sone Tower

Contact: Sibyl Canaan, Library Director, (914) 737-7110 or www.peekskill.org

Pelham (Town of Pelham Public Library)**Reflections: Inside/Outside the Box**

Working with a writer and a visual artist through ten collaboratively designed workshops, participants will use memory as a primary source to create original work, first in poetry and then in two and three dimensions. The first five sessions, held at the Pelham Art Center, will be followed by five sessions at the Town of Pelham Public Library – providing full access to the rich resources of both facilities.

Workshop Dates: February – May 2010

Arts Partner: Pelham Arts Center with Bill Wertheim (poetry) and Susan Kaufman (visual arts)

Contact: Patricia Perito, Library Director, Town of Pelham Public Library, (914) 728-1234, and Filomena Iolascon, Education/Outreach Programs Manager, Pelham Art Center, (914) 738-2525 or www.pelhamlibrary.org

Somers Public Library**Hip, Smooth, and Swing: Lindy and Rumba Dance Instruction**

Twice a week for eight weeks, two groups of older adults will dance their way into spring! Instruction in both the rumba and the lindy will keep participants nimble and ready for a culminating performance in May.

Workshop Dates: March – April 2010

Arts Partner: Frank Elia

Contact: Pat Miller, Library Director, (914) 232-1285 or www.somerslibrary.org

Tarrytown (The Warner Library)**A Performance of a Lifetime**

This eight week workshop will use a combination of interactive exercises, partnered learning, instructor handouts, and supportive, constructive group feedback to explore the art and skill of writing scripts for the stage. Culminating in a staged reading that showcases the scenes and monologues created by the participants, this workshop is suitable for anyone who has ever attended theatre, has any interest in opening themselves to greater creativity through writing or performing, and wants to explore storytelling with a focus on the theatrical genre.

Workshop Dates: March – May 2010

Art Partner: Staci Swedeen

Contact: Maureen Petry, Library Director, (914) 631-7671 or www.warnerlibrary.org

Yonkers (Riverfront Library)**The Hudson River Cityscape at Yonkers: Portraits of a City Revitalization**

An eight week acrylic painting class will take advantage of the library's unique location on the Hudson River waterfront in Yonkers. Cityscape and riverfront will provide inspiration as participants explore the qualities and versatility of acrylic paint.

Workshop Dates: January – April 2010

Arts Partner: Jamie Ross

Contact: Jody Maier, Adult Services Librarian, (914) 337-1500 or www.ypl.org

Yorktown (John C. Hart Memorial Library)

Memoir Monologues: From Page to Stage

This ten week, twenty session workshop series will guide participants through a progression of memoir writing and theatre techniques, with memoir as chronicle and communication. Participants will write using structured yet open-ended, creative exercises to craft personal remembrances that will culminate in a staged reading with words, music, and personal objects as backdrop for performance.

Workshop Dates: March 3 – May 13, 2010

Art Partners: Mary Crescenzo and Richard Manichello

Contact: Melinda O'Brien, (914) 245-5262 or www.yorktownlibrary.org

For additional information, please contact WLS at www.westchesterlibraries.org / (914) 231-3226 or Lifetime Arts at www.lifetimearts.org / (914) 355-2304.

About the Westchester Library System

The Westchester Library System (WLS) includes 38 member public libraries located throughout the County and is one of New York State's 23 public library systems. WLS and its member libraries have a total collection of 5.4 million items, including 3.7 million books, as well as audio recordings, videocassettes, DVDs, print serials, and other materials. The mission of the Westchester Library System is to ensure that all residents have seamless access to excellent library service throughout Westchester County. The Westchester Library System serves as a center of innovation for the Westchester County library community. WLS provides model programs, affordable and easy-to-use information technology, and support services that enable libraries to continuously improve service to their communities. For more information, please visit www.westchesterlibraries.org.

About Lifetime Arts, Inc.

Lifetime Arts, Inc. is a tax exempt, not for profit organization whose mission is to encourage creative aging by promoting the inclusion of professional arts programs in organizations that serve older adults; to prepare artists to develop the creative capacity of older adult learners; and to foster lifelong learning in and through the arts by increasing opportunities for older adults to participate in intergenerational and community based programming. For more information visit: www.lifetimearts.org, email info@lifetimearts.org, or call (914) 355-2304.

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2008-09 Program Photo Caption:



Reflections on a Lifetime at the Town of Pelham Public Library