



Charity *Datebook*

Celebrating local philanthropy: the people, the organizations, the causes and the many months of fundraising events in Chester County & beyond.
In partnership with Chester County Community Foundation

2022



From the Guest Editors



IT HAS BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE COVID STRUCK, AND WHILE WE ARE NOT back to a pre-pandemic normal, the world looks much different today than it did this time last year. Organizations continue to expand and deepen their technology expertise to stay in touch with audiences virtually. At the same time, many in-person gatherings and live performances are back. Let's make this the year of the revitalization of our arts, culture and historic preservation sector.

The arts are essential to the social and economic wellbeing of our community. Yet, the arts and culture sector has been particularly vulnerable throughout the pandemic. Restrictions on gatherings and changes in consumer behavior have taken a devastating toll on the art galleries, theaters and museums in our community. Now is the time to show up and support the arts, whether that means streaming online concerts, renewing your subscriptions, or once again attending in-person performances.

In this Datebook you'll find charity event listings and highlights from fundraising events. You'll also find nonprofit and donor profiles. We've selected a handful of the many arts, culture and historic preservation nonprofit charities that entertained and enriched our community this year to highlight.

After nearly two years of the pandemic, many live performances and concerts are starting back up again. Before now, arts, culture and historic preservation organizations creatively pivoted to reach their audience in new and exciting ways. The charities that pivoted most rapidly were those that had visionary, resilient leadership combined with strong support from their donors. We trust their stories will inspire you.

If you are looking to get involved in your community, please DO. We invite you to contact us to learn more about volunteer opportunities, committee service, board leadership, ways to donate and means to build a legacy to fulfill your charitable intentions. We have expertise in emerging community issues and connections to the local, regional and national charities best-positioned to meet Chester County's needs and aspirations.

We are here to connect you to the causes that matter. For good. Forever.

Here's to your health!

Karen Simmons
President/CEO

Michael DeHaven, CPA
Chair of the Board

Chester County Community Foundation
www.chescocf.org



COUNTY LINES
MAGAZINE

Food for Thought

Transforming our Region into a Better Place for All

THE VISION OF THE CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY Foundation is to be a philanthropic catalyst for positive change, strategically and intentionally engaging donors and partners to address the common good while transforming our region into a better place for all. This aligns with the core definition of philanthropy: active effort to promote human welfare.

Last year our Food for Thought program evolved into "Community Conversations" via Zoom, with the aim to guide Chester County towards a healthier, happier and more equitable future. At each Food for Thought session, we watched a TED Talk about a social justice topic and engaged nonprofits, philanthropic donors, local politicians and community members in a conversation on issues ranging from racism and disability rights to LGBTQ+ discrimination and more.

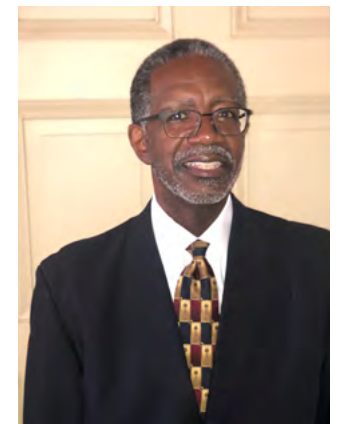
"Food for Thought provides a safe space to have difficult but much-needed conversations," notes Timmy Nelson, a retired Senior Vice President for UPS and an active community volunteer. "These programs help educate about systematic issues and encourage community members to adopt more inclusive values and viewpoints."

Community Conversations series started back up again in January 2022. Discussions will be taking place on Zoom at noon the third Tuesday of the month through June 2022. Visit ChesCoCF.org to register for free.

As we present you with this year's Charity Datebook focused on arts, culture and historic preservation organizations, please remember that the arts are a vehicle for positive change and social justice. Not only is art a source of entertainment and happiness, it can provoke, encourage and advance social change.

Art and music play a crucial role in mobilizing social movements. A significant number of Food for Thought attendees are from arts organizations in Chester County. They understand art gives people, especially young people, the ability to express themselves and challenge the world around them.

Never underestimate the transformative power of the arts, culture and historic preservation sector.



Photos from top: Food for Thought banner; Food for Thought Zoom; Timmy Nelson

Historic Sugartown

Offering a window into early 19th-century American life

Along Sugartown Road in Malvern stands the remarkably intact and lovingly restored 19th-century village of Sugartown. After the American Revolution, Sugartown's earliest residents established a school, a general store, local businesses and a meeting center, creating a vibrant community that provided goods and services to surrounding farms. The village served as a vital stop for weary travelers throughout the 1800s.

The restoration of Sugartown began in 1982 when Penelope "Penny" Wil-

son met John Nagy and said, "You live across from that crumbling, sad mess!" For years after that first meeting, Penny and the Nagys worked tirelessly to rescue the seemingly forgotten and forlorn village. Penny was motivated by a desire for others to discover and value Sugartown's authentic historic setting. Sadly Penny passed away in 2021, but her passion for Sugartown lives on.

Today Historic Sugartown offers a valuable window into early 19th-century American life. Visitors get to experience how people would have

come together to conduct business, exchange news and share their lives as a community. Historic Sugartown inspires new generations to connect with America's past through richly authentic historical experiences and the preservation of the village.

As Executive Director Heather Reiffer explains, "We strive to inspire the community to engage

with the past, participate in the village's present life and protect it for the future."

Two years into the pandemic and Historic Sugartown is back with in-person tours and visitation, in addition to virtual tours and workshops that will continue to be offered. Starting this year, Sugartown will celebrate a special milestone in preservation, as 2022 marks 40 years since Historic Sugartown was incorporated and September 2024 will mark 40 years since the village was named a National Historic Register District.

Learn more at HistoricSugartown.com.



PHOTO CREDIT: CRISSY EVERHART PHOTOGRAPHY

Historic Yellow Springs

Stirring the imagination of those who visit



Over the last 300 years, Historic Yellow Springs has enriched our community through art, history, education and environmental preservation. This is a living village steeped in a distinguished history dating back to the 18th century. The goal of Historic Yellow Springs is to share, preserve and celebrate its unique living village, stirring the imagination of those who visit.

The original inhabitants of the land were the Lenape people. Since then,

the village has been the headquarters of a spa, the first military hospital in North America, the Chester Springs Soldiers' Orphan School, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Country School, and Good News Productions, the film studio responsible for the *The Blob*.

Historic Yellow Springs is home to the Chester Springs Studio, where art classes, exhibitions and workshops are available to the public. A variety of art events are held each year, including the Yellow Springs Art Show, the Historic Yellow Springs Members Art Show, and the Fine Arts & Craft Show.

In response to the pandemic, an outdoor community event, Art Around the Village, was added to the Yellow Springs Art Show.

Throughout the pandemic, Historic Yellow Springs connected with the community via virtual tours, classes and workshops. This expansion into virtual programming helped reach new audiences, with

attendees joining in from around the world—as far away as Australia! Using outdoor and virtual events demonstrates innovation and Historic Yellow Springs' commitment to providing the community with resources to educate about art and history.

When asked about its future, Executive Director Karen Walter says, "Historic Yellow Springs is a place like no other, and it has so much to offer to so many. We are happy to be coming out of the pandemic and looking forward to making 2022, our 300th year anniversary, a banner year."

Learn more at YellowSprings.org.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Ramon Townsend

Ramon Townsend has led workshops in Historic Sugartown's Book Bindery since 2015. Nearly 40 workshops are offered annually under Ramon's tutelage, including bookbinding, book restoration, book sewing and paper marbling. At the onset of the pandemic, Ramon adapted his workshops to a virtual format and quickly amassed students from 18 states. "Ever since I apprenticed at Colonial Williamsburg's Bindery, I've had a deep passion for the traditional handcraft of bookbinding. I couldn't be happier for the chance to share this passion with others at Historic Sugartown," says Ramon.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Bob and Nancy Holman

Longtime supporters Bob and Nancy Holman give countless hours of their time and talent maintaining the beautiful grounds and gardens at Historic Yellow Springs. The gardens are enjoyed by the many visitors, especially those who get married at the historic venue. Bob also has a familial connection to Historic Yellow Springs, as he is a descendant of Margaret Holman, who owned and operated the Yellow Springs Spa from 1821 to 1845.



Kennett Symphony

The musical landscape of a historic region renowned for the arts

Established in 1940, Kennett Symphony is the only professional orchestra in Chester County and provides the musical landscape of a historic region renowned for the arts. Its professional orchestral musicians come from Pennsylvania, Delaware, New York, Maryland and New Jersey. The Symphony performs for, engages with, and enriches more than 5,000 members of the community every season.

Kennett Symphony engages with audience members in unique and exciting ways—from community concerts to music-themed 5K races. The Symphony also has a strong commitment to supporting musical enrichment programs, including emerging artist instrumental

and composition competitions, children's choruses and instrument zoos.

As live performances were on hold at the onset of Covid, Kennett Symphony got creative off the stage by sharing music with the community. Musicians of the Symphony recorded videos at home to share on YouTube and Facebook, effectively launching the "Musicians from Home" series.

Music Director Michael Hall created engaging content with "Michael's Musings," a series of videos that presented the ABCs of the orchestral world.

Connecting with audience members on social media through informative lectures and pre-recorded performances provided much-needed entertainment and escape during the pandemic.

Now back on stage, Kennett Symphony returns to live performance with an expanded Masterworks series, Symphony Under The Stars summer concert at Longwood Gardens' Open Air The-



PHOTO CREDIT: MATTHEW WAN

atre, and a host of other events sure to appeal to varied musical tastes.

Looking into the future, Kennett Symphony is eager to expand its diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives with the help of the 2021 Catalyst Fund grant from the League of American Orchestras and the Chester County Community Foundation.

As Music Director Michael Hall says, "For all of us at Kennett Symphony, the pandemic has brought into sharp focus the importance and relevance of creating live music."

Learn more at KennettSymphony.org.



PHOTO CREDIT: NATALE CACCAMO

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Dr. Timothy Vance Blair

Dr. Timothy Vance Blair is an accomplished musician, arts educator and scholar who is known as a philanthropic supporter of Chester County artistic and cultural anchors. He serves as a Kennett Symphony board member and helps build partnerships with leading community organizations in the Greater Philadelphia region. Dr. Blair is recognized as a top leader in education and the arts, and Kennett Symphony is thankful for the passion and knowledge he brings to the organization.

Oxford Arts Alliance

Fostering a sense of community



The mission of the Oxford Arts Alliance is simple: to encourage and facilitate presentations of art exhibitions, lectures, lessons and workshops to benefit the public and foster a sense of community. This arts group strives for a collaborative platform that allows artists of all ethnic origins, economic levels, ages and disabilities to flourish.

Located in the beautifully restored Simon Building, the Arts Alliance is a leader and advocate for arts and culture in the southern Chester County town of Oxford. As explained by Executive Director Anthony Derrico, "Through various programming, the Oxford Arts Alliance aims to increase

economic development, provide leadership and networking opportunities, and promote the arts."

The Arts Alliance puts on a number of art exhibitions throughout the year. The Emerging Artist Gallery gives young and inspiring artists a space to design an exhibition and share their work with the community. Young artists immerse themselves in a professional and artistic environment alongside the Main Gallery.

Other exhibitions include the Oxford Student Exhibition, Members Exhibition and National Juried Exhibition, along with works on display at the Artisan Gift Shop, which showcases handmade artisan goods ranging from woodwork and paintings to textiles and ceramics.

In partnership with the West Grove-Avon-dale Rotary, the Oxford Arts Alliance started

the Larry F. Thompson Memorial Scholarship Fund to provide individual need-based scholarships to music students at the Oxford Arts Alliance Academy of Music. In memory of Larry, a beloved member of the West Grove-Avon-dale Rotary and a music student of the Arts Alliance, this scholarship passes the passion for music onto the next generation and ensures that no student will be denied access to a musical education.

Learn more at OxfordArt.org.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Dave Eldreth

In response to the pandemic, the Oxford Arts Alliance announced a town beautification project called "The Outdoor Gallery Project." Organized by board member Dave Eldreth, this project displays oversized high-resolution images of local art on participating buildings in Oxford. Unlike traditional murals, the artwork is easily interchangeable and can move around town. As Dave explains, "This project aims to bring attention to fine art in the local area and promote Oxford and the Oxford Arts Alliance as creative destinations for visitors." Dave is an artist himself, as are many supporters of the Oxford Arts Alliance, including artist Vicki Vinton and her husband Wilson King.



People's Light

Discover and celebrate our shared humanity

People's Light is known for its resident company of artists, eclectic mix of productions and innovative work with young people. Through theater programs that entertain, inspire and engage the community, People's Light aims to excite curiosity about the world around us.

"We invite diverse communities to discover and celebrate our shared sense of humanity," says Zak Berkman, Producing Artistic Director.

Creativity, artistry, curiosity, civic responsibility, inclusion, connection and stewardship are the core values of People's Light. These values arise

from a desire to foster opportunities for self-discovery, a sense of connection with others and lifelong learning.

People's Light has put renewed energy into its diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racist work. In spring 2021, Zonya Love was commissioned to create and perform *Spiritual Uprising*, an original piece that took on great personal urgency following the murder of George Floyd. People's Light partnered with Cheyney University, the Melton Center, the LGBT Equality Alliance of Chester County and others for an outdoor series that included a piece about the life and legacy of Bayard Rustin, Chester County's influential civil rights leader.

People's Light has big plans in 2022. *Personality: The Lloyd Price Musical* is the world's first musical to celebrate that Rock & Roll Hall of Fame legend. *Hold These Truths* is inspired by the true story of Gordon Hirabayashi and his activism



The cast of "A Christmas Carol"

PHOTO CREDIT: MARK GARVIN

surrounding WWII Japanese exclusion and internment.

Also planned for 2022, *Bayard Rustin Inside Ashland* is a world premiere play that soars with African American spirituals and offers a glimpse into a transformative moment for young Rustin—his 1944 prison sentence in Ashland, Kentucky that put his faith in non-violent resistance to the test. Interwoven with song and dance, outrageous humor and tour de force performances, these stories, along with two additional plays, embody the resilience and power of the human spirit.

Learn more at PeoplesLight.org.



Natalie Carter and André Ward in a production of "Dot"

PHOTO CREDIT: MARK GARVIN

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Anne Congdon LaRossa

Anne Congdon LaRossa firmly believes, "Places that evoke creative energy are crucial to the human heart and mind." Anne's late husband, George, created stunning spaces with Willard Rouse and the amazing team at Liberty Property Trust. "We were deeply pleased when People's Light approached us about its need for a new space for its production shops, rehearsal rooms, intimate stage and offices. The Congdon Center cemented my enduring commitment to People's Light. It's not just the building, though. It's the people whose lives People's Light impacts, propelling us forward as human beings."

Revival Production

Dedicated to the revitalization of Coatesville



Revival Productions is a performing arts company dedicated to serving the Coatesville area. "As the vision for starting our organization became clearer and the revitalization of our community in Coatesville began to take off, the word 'revival' finally felt like it had found its purpose," says Co-Founder Heather Grayberg. And so, Revival Productions was founded in 2017 and now provides exceptional, professional and affordable live entertainment of all genres for all ages.

Arts education is a core value of Revival Productions. Starting as simple summer programming, Revival Perform-

ing Arts Conservatory has grown into a year-round robust educational experience. Private lessons, group classes, workshops and camps are offered for both children and adults. Programs include preschool dance and music classes; ballet, tap and jazz classes for kids and teens; homeschool dance, theater and improv classes; and voice and piano lessons.

Another way Revival Productions gives back to the community is through See-A-Show, an educational program that allows students in grades K-12 to attend matinee performances free of charge.

Despite the pandemic, Revival Productions was able to begin operations at its new facility in July 2020. By creatively adapting with live streaming and new programs, like the Cohort Academy, Revival Productions has been able to persevere through these

difficult times and reach audiences in the thousands.

Revival Productions wrapped up the 2021 season with its annual *Talent Slam*, *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol*, and performances of *Handel's Messiah*, featuring a live orchestra and Revival's Coatesville Community Choir. In 2022, Revival Productions will be hosting five mainstage plays and musicals starting with *The SpongeBob Musical* in May. Additionally, live concerts, fundraisers and other exciting events will take place at the new mainstage location in downtown Coatesville.

Learn more at RevivalProductions.com.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

The Lentz Family

The Lentz Family got involved with Revival Productions by volunteering at their very first event in 2017 called "Carol for a Cause." Since then the family—Amy and Nathan, their sons Marshall and William, and Nathan's sister Tiffany—has donated their time, expertise and fiscal support to the organization. William and Marshall attended Revival's first summer camp in 2018 and Nathan and Tiffany joined Revival's Board of Directors in 2019 and 2021, respectively. Whether it's creating videos for fundraisers, building sets and designing costumes, offering professional advice and advocacy, or volunteering, the Lentz family has provided generous support to Revival Productions.



SALT Performing Arts

“Community” is paramount in community theater

SALT Performing Arts believes that “community” is paramount in community theater and strives to foster an all-inclusive atmosphere that promotes a positive, uplifting experience. The group is committed to providing live theater, educational workshops, dinner theater, summer camp programming, professional performance opportunities and community outreach to support people from all walks of life.

SALT has invited more than 10,000 performers on stage and inspired more than 5,000 children through their partner program, Stagelight. At their Playhouse for Preschoolers at the Mont-

gomery School, children participate in socialization, collaboration and opportunities for self-expression in a safe and nurturing environment, igniting a love of learning while building confidence through creativity and the arts. This focus on youth earned SALT the Daisy Award for the Best Education Children’s Performing Arts Programs in Chester County.

With the support of generous donors, SALT has been able to perform for homeless veterans, partner with Acting Antics to work with actors of All-Abilities, launch Anti-Bullying Assemblies at local elementary schools, and host free community nights.

SALT Performing Arts has been successful in pivoting during the pandemic to create meaningful experiences via live-streamed performances, outdoor events and drive-by concerts. To think outside the box during the pandemic, SALT even put performers inside a plexiglass box for a women-led performance of *Nunsense*.

This arts group returned to the stage with performances of *Elf*,



Frozen Jr. and *The Best-Laid Plans for Romance*, SALT’s first annual local playwright production performed at the West Chester black box theater location.

SALT has ambitious plans for 2022 with theatrical performances of *Seussical the Musical*, *Winnie the Pooh*, *Evita*, *The Music Man*, *Rodgers & Hammerstein’s Cinderella* and *White Christmas*.

“We could not have gotten through these past two years without our loyal following,” says SALT Founder, President and Artist Director Lauren McComas. “We are excited to continue providing entertainment and enrichment to the community after persevering through a monumental year.”

Learn more at SALTPA.com.



Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center

A people-powered project



Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center promotes cultural, economic and civic life experiences in the heart of West Chester through live theater, music, dance and film. Uptown! Entertainment Alliance—a people-powered project founded in 2011 by Richard May, Linda Foster, Connie McEvoy and Tom McEvoy—operates the Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center.

The Arts Center was a National Guard Armory before becoming the home of Uptown! and has played an

important role in West Chester’s history. In May 2012 the Armory was put up for sale and was purchased three years later by Uptown! Bravo Theatre, LLC. A one-year historic rehabilitation project began in May 2016 and the Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center officially opened the following year.

The Arts Center has become a special gathering place in the community, reflecting the diversity of the region. In addition to Broadway-style performances, Uptown! is known for award-winning arts education classes and workshops. The West Chester Studio for the Performing Arts at Uptown! is a community-wide acting and musical theater school that helps students with their acting skills and confidence—all while having fun!

With the help from a grant from the Chester County Community Foundation and a fundraiser that raised over \$500,000, Uptown! was able to purchase video equipment and live stream performances throughout the pandemic so audiences could be entertained at home.

The theater is now open to the public, with added safety precautions, but Uptown! plans to keep streaming performances in the future.

Learn more at UptownWestChester.org.



DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Warren Financial Services

Warren Financial Services has been a top SALT sponsor since its founding eight years ago. “We find truth in the idea that you can achieve your financial goals when you have a greater purpose in mind, going beyond just financial security,” explains Chief Investment Officer Randy Warren. One of the greater purposes for Warren Financial has been community outreach and other philanthropic pursuits.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

A. Roy Smith

Following his passion for historic preservation and the performing arts, A. Roy Smith of West Chester made a generous charitable gift in support of the main performance venue in the Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center, now named the A. Roy Smith Bravo Main Stage Theatre. When asked about the naming of the Main Stage, Roy says, “I have been extremely fortunate during my lifetime, and to be able to share it seems the right thing to do. To be recognized in this way for doing so is most gratifying.” With his generous gift, Roy also wants to recognize the National Guard Bravo Company, which operated out of the historic Armory from 1916 to 2014. Roy has served as a Board Member of Uptown! Entertainment Alliance since 2013 and is the current Treasurer.



West Chester Dance Works

Taking inspired dance where the people are

West Chester Dance Works has provided community members with access to the fullness of dance and its diversity of ideas, feelings and styles since 1983. The group aims to realize and explore the talents of its members by exposing them to the many benefits of dance. Members undergo physical, technical and artistic growth as they acquire performance experience, attend lectures and demonstrations, and engage in residencies for artistic, cultural and educational outreach.

At the core of West Chester Dance Works is a model of unity and opti-

mism that brings people together. A commitment is made through outreach programs and performances to display various forms of dance that enrich and expand the community. For instance, the Relevate Youth project aims to address barriers in youth development while affirming and building feelings of self-worth through interactive dance programs. West Chester Dance Works helps young people overcome obtrusive barriers to healthy and productive lifestyles.

Other programs include the Signature/Training Company, a semi-professional modern dance company;

DM Dance Machine, a dance team with members ages 13 through 18 that combines technical strengthening with team building; Junior Performers, a performance group for younger dancers ages 9 through 12; Anointed Dance and Anointed Too, spiritual performance groups for adults and youth; as well as annual Christmas productions.



PHOTO CREDIT: CHARLES SMITH

As Artistic Director Diane Matthews says, "We take inspired dance where the people are."

West Chester Dance Works adjusted to the pandemic by using technology to offer virtual classes when in-person dancing was not an option, hosting online events including a virtual Zumbathon, and producing two fully pre-recorded concerts that were released to the community electronically. While these new modes of connecting with audience members virtually have expanded its reach, West Chester Dance Works is very excited to be back to having live recitals and performances.

Learn more at WestChesterDanceWorks.org.



PHOTO CREDIT: CASSANDRA ROMPALA

DONOR SPOTLIGHT



Kathleen McBratnie Memorial Foundation

The Kathleen McBratnie Memorial Foundation is an avid supporter of West Chester Dance Works. The fund's honoree Kathleen (Kathy) was an early supporter of the dance group and her daughter Kristy was a student of the company's resident dancing school. The fund, organized under the Chester County Community Foundation, celebrates Kathy's memory by providing opportunities for young people in the West Chester community and beyond. West Chester Dance Works is honored to receive this support for its youth programming.