

**SAFE
HARBORS
OF THE HUDSON**

HOUSING • ARTS • COMMUNITY

NEWSLETTER

Transforming lives and building community through housing and the arts

2020/2021

**Black
Renaissance
Festival**

**Virtual
Gala**

**COVID-19
Response**



A Message from Executive Director, Lisa Silverstone



I think we can all agree, 2020 has been a helluva year!

Here at Safe Harbors, it was an alarming time early in the pandemic, with COVID-19 spreading quickly and lethally through The Cornerstone Residence. Immediately, our primary focus became the mitigation of the insidious virus and the health and wellness of our residents. With our partners, Independent Living, we quickly mobilized a command center to conduct 100% wellness checks seven days a week; assess the health of our residents and ensure they were aware of the resources available to them. Most importantly, we were reassuring everyone that even in times of isolation and uncertainty, no one was alone. As a result of our vigilance, in early May, the last known case of COVID-19 was expunged from the building and we have remained free of the virus since!

Like so many organizations, Safe Harbors has had to significantly adjust the way we create and distribute content to engage our community through visual and performing arts, while balancing federal and state guidelines to mitigate the spread of the virus. We have also strived to be sensitive and responsive to issues of isolation, health, uncertainty and social, racial and political upheaval.

While this year has been a challenge - we have been successful at remaining true to our mission. Beginning in May and throughout the past six months, we have provided a robust calendar of on-line programming that reflects the diversity of our community.

We celebrated the little things, as we were able to safely open the door of our Ann Street Gallery to small, masked, socially distanced audiences.

We feel proud that even during a pandemic and an arduous year, Safe Harbors continues to foster the spirit of human connection and celebrate the ability of the arts to nourish even the most weary of souls.

In the months ahead, we will continue to navigate this new terrain, keeping the health of our residents, staff and community paramount, while providing relevant, responsive and reflective arts to our community.

Undoubtedly, this year has been about the strength and resilience of our community and so, we thank you for your support through this time, when it is more critical than ever!

COVID-19 Response

Resident Food Pantry

Through generous support from community donors, Safe Harbors was able to establish a temporary pantry, providing food, puzzles and personal protective equipment to everyone in the building. We were also fortunate to have community partners purchase boxed meals from local restaurants; providing delicious meals for our residents while supporting local businesses struggling during this time; a win, win!



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HOUSING



GED Graduates

Thanks to our partner, SUNY Orange and instructor, Marvin Schwartzwalder (pictured here with recent graduates), The Cornerstone GED program has been going strong for 14 years! Despite the best efforts of 2020 to derail the plans, we ended the year with a bang, celebrating three GED graduates! Our recent graduates plan to continue on to college and pursue new job opportunities.



Keeping Our Community Healthy

Thank you to CVS for bringing a flu shot clinic to our building for our residents, staff and neighbors, ensuring even those isolating or unable to access transportation the opportunity to stay healthy this winter.

You and Your Vote Count!

Safe Harbors provided on-site voter registration and assistance completing the 2020 census making sure everyone is counted and every voice is heard.



Quilting Workshops

A quilting workshop that took place before COVID-19 paid off in spades! Starting with one square led to quilts for the grandkids and the creation of face masks for community, friends, and family.



Resident WiFi

This summer, WiFi access points were installed throughout The Cornerstone to provide residents with free WiFi.



Financial Literacy Class

Safe Harbors partnered with Mid-Hudson Valley Federal Credit Union to provide financial literacy classes. Topics of special interest included Budgeting Basics and Understanding Credit. These topics are especially useful for our residents when they are creating their own real-life budgets.

visit our website at www.safe-harbors.org

ARTS

National Endowment for the Arts Grant

Safe Harbors Ann Street Gallery has been awarded \$50,000 through the National Endowment for the Arts as part of the CARES Act. This grant will support Safe Harbors' ongoing arts mission and will afford us the opportunity to expand the Gallery's reflective, relevant and inclusive programming, outreach and engagement and facilitate a greater understanding and appreciation of contemporary arts across cultures, among generations and within our community.



Black Renaissance Festival Exhibition and Celebration

Safe Harbors of the Hudson continually strives to present relevant, reflective, inclusive and accessible arts in, for and by our community. As our society confronts systemic racism, Safe Harbors embraces the Black Lives Matter movement and banded together with Black community leaders, artists and activists to create our first Black Renaissance Festival, a celebration and amplification of Black voices in our community.

The Festival spanned the Safe Harbors project from the Green to the Gallery and featured a wonderful array of Black-owned vendors and food trucks and an exhibition of visual and performing arts by talented local Black artists and allies.

Safe Harbors was proud to host an exhibition of these extraordinarily talented artists, many of whom were sharing their work publicly for the first time. The diverse selection of works presented included a closed loop video featuring performances by spoken word artists, dancers, singers and instrumentalists; and the walls of the Gallery were brought to life by an incredible collection of photographs, oils, acrylics, pastels, collages and textiles.

The exhibition, which drew hundreds of Festival-goers, art enthusiasts and community members for its opening event, continued to draw many more visitors to the Gallery during its open hours through the end of November.

Safe Harbors extends a huge thank you to the Festival organizers, volunteers and artists!

Above artwork by Attiya Awadallah "Spiral"

Performance Art featured Luis Mikal Sanchez singing "Speechless"



Thank You Gallery Volunteers

We are so appreciative of our volunteers who have helped keep our Gallery doors open and gave the community an opportunity to experience art during unprecedented times.



Bold and Bright Colors Bring Cheer During Difficult Times

We were pleased to present the exhibit, *House Party - Paintings by Erica Hauser*. The bright, bold, exuberant works, inspired by mid-century color and design, illuminated the gallery and cheered the soul. The opening event was shared live on Facebook and included an engaging conversation with Erica about her work and inspiration.

Painting on right, "More Than The Ear Can Hold"



Safe Harbors Welcomes Diana Mangaser - New Director of Ann Street Gallery



I look forward to taking the position of the Ann Street Gallery Director with the vision of working with the Safe Harbors Executive Director and staff to leverage the Gallery's curation and exhibition of high-caliber contemporary art towards creating new opportunities for education and immersion in the arts in Newburgh. As one of the only visual arts venues in the city since 2007, Ann Street Gallery has served as a locus for Newburgh's arts & cultural landscape, supporting hundreds of artists and welcoming visitors through several exhibitions every year. Building on this foundation, the Ann Street Gallery will offer innovative exhibitions, events, and programs that seek to increase arts literacy and appreciation by engaging widely diverse artists of all ages and disciplines. With a commitment to promoting forward-thinking, socially responsive, and under-represented positions in contemporary practice, the Gallery aims to be a platform for engaging in new experiences and conversations around art. I am excited to welcome everyone to the Ann Street Gallery in the new year!

The Contemporary Art of Quilting

This unique exhibit was comprised of over forty quilted works by twenty artists, who are experimenting with this fiber-based artform while pushing boundaries and challenging expectations.

Visitors to the exhibit were immersed in a rare opportunity to view a compilation of cutting-edge quilt interpretations, resplendent in design and concept. These works ranged from three-dimensional pedestal pieces to wall sized installations, showcasing a variety of styles that highlighted thought-provoking responses to issues on community, consumerism and politics.



Artwork above by Rosy Petri "Mr. Chaney" Quilt

Artwork on right by Sylvia Hernandez "Spike Lee #Brooklyn"



Influenced by Nature

Influenced by Nature, guest curated by local artist, Kirsten Kucer, was another wonderful exhibit featuring a collection of works by artists each expressing and recording their personal relationship to nature. This exhibition aimed to simultaneously draw attention to nature and the world around us, and celebrate the many ways in which these artists are moved to honor its multiplicity.



Artwork above by Holly Sumner, "Scarlet Larkspur"

Ritz Kidz Circus on the Green

Safe Harbors was thrilled to welcome an international team of circus coaches and educators to engage our Circus on the Green students in a two-week summer program designed to expand upon their circus arts skills and focus on leadership training. Due to the generous support from our community and the National Endowment for the Arts, we are able to extend this unique program into a year-long initiative which will position these students as peer leaders for next summer's session.



Plugged In for The Ritz

The Lobby at the Ritz virtually flourished this year when it took its programming into the ether for our audiences to enjoy in the safety and comfort of their own homes. Our music series didn't miss a beat with weekly performances from some of our favorite Hudson Valley singers, songwriters and musicians streaming live on Facebook.



Plugged In for The Ritz performance by Jeff Haynes



Plugged In for The Ritz performance by Chihoe Hahn

Act + React: Monologues and Conversations

Since we couldn't welcome you to the Lobby at the Ritz during the pandemic, we were delighted to invite you to join us live on Facebook for Act + React, a new monologue and conversation series created exclusively for Safe Harbors on-line programming.

Edward Gibbons-Brown of Find Your Light, LLC is the charming, talented and insightful producer, host and interlocutor of the popular series.

Mr. Gibbons-Brown gathered a cadre of Hudson Valley actors to read their favorite monologues and provide follow-up with a lively exchange of questions and conversations about the selected work.

We plan to continue the series into the new year and hope you will listen in.



*Act + React producer and host
Edward Gibbons-Brown*

COMMUNITY

Ritz Kidz Talent Show

The annual Ritz Kidz Talent Show featured our community's amazing youth in an afternoon of musical entertainment.



Caribbean Dance Party

In the winter cold, our community warmed up with a fun evening of Caribbean music, dancing, dessert and drinks at our Caribbean Dance Party!



Volunteer Appreciation

This year we were proud and honored to recognize Nancy Layne as Safe Harbors Volunteer of the Year. Nancy started volunteering in 2016 and has quite possibly volunteered for every event Safe Harbors has hosted. From the 5K, to the Gala, to the Community Paint-in, Nancy is a dedicated volunteer who brings her energy, compassion and commitment to our organization and the entire community. For their generous donation of our annual Cornerstone Thanksgiving feast for the past five years, Safe Harbors was delighted to recognize Parkurst Dining as our In-Kind Donor of the Year. The spread Parkhurst creates for our residents is beautifully prepared and delicious, and their crew makes everything so easy for us! Thank you to all our friends at Parkhurst Dining!



The Washington Project

Safe Harbors Lobby at the Ritz was pleased to host students from the Newburgh Enlarged City School District presenting interpretations of Washington's historic events through their own, individually created theatrical and musical performances. The Washington Project was a collaborative effort of the Newburgh Enlarged City School District, Safe Harbors of the Hudson and Washington's Headquarters State Historic Site.



Virtual Gala 2020

As COVID-19 was forcing the cancellation of fundraising events, the need for the funds was more critical than ever! Safe Harbors, like so many non-profit organizations, was grappling with this conundrum ... how do we engage our donors and supporters if we can't invite them to our traditional gala event?

In deciding to take our annual fundraiser on-line, we realized this challenge presented a unique opportunity to reach many more community members and demonstrate more clearly the depth and breadth of the work Safe Harbors is doing to transform lives and build community through housing and the arts.

As opposed to our traditional two-hour gala, we chose to showcase, over five days, the people, places and things that make up the Safe Harbors organization. Those who tuned in to the event were treated to in-depth tours of Safe Harbors Green, the Cornerstone Residence and of the historic Ritz Theater along with insight into its redevelopment. We shared spotlights and success stories of our residents and community partners; and each evening, viewers were entertained by an amazing lineup of musicians, dancers, poets and songsters.

The generosity of our community, especially in times of deep need, is truly heartwarming! With all of your help, we were able to exceed our fundraising goal while extending our reach beyond the confines of a traditional gala. Thank you for your support! If you didn't get a chance to see the gala content, please visit our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9zGlouo0HRKyDNtaMgr1Dw>



Virtual Salsa Under the Stars

Virtual Salsa Under the Stars kicked off Safe Harbors celebration of National Hispanic Month in September and continued through the year. We were delighted to bring the music and dance of Latino cultures directly into your homes so you could dance and sing along with our talented performers!



Newburgh With Love

We celebrated Valentine's Day as a community with a special event featuring City of Newburgh Poet Laureate, Mona Toscano reading from her own collection of love poems while Neil Alexander tickled the ivories with both original and timeless music selections of romance and love.



NECSD All District Art Show

Each year we look forward to hosting the Newburgh Enlarged City School District Art Show. Students and their families attended an exhibit opening reception and the artwork was displayed in the Lobby at the Ritz throughout the month of March.



Kyle Beliveau is a high school student with a dual diagnosis of Asperger's and ADHD and has a long history of being bullied. At Safe Harbors, Kyle has found a safe haven and has excelled as a respected leader among his peers during the Ritz Kids theater arts classes, comedy workshops and four years of circus arts. Never has Kyle been more at home, more comfortable and more confident than he is on stage, where he is loved, accepted and respected for who he is. Kyle is a true Ritz Kid!



Dancers Rock the House for Black History Month

Safe Harbors celebrated Black History Month in the Lobby at the Ritz with a variety of talented dance groups from Orange, Ulster and Dutchess Counties as they presented African-inspired dance and Hip Hop to a standing-room-only crowd.



Safe Harbors Green Brimming with Life

We are happy to provide a beautiful space for our community to safely be together when they need it most.



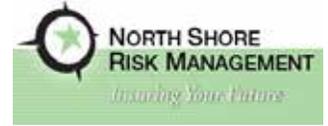
Zumba instructor and Safe Harbors Board member, Maritza Calderon-Caballero, gets everyone moving on the Green.



The Stroller Brigade finds a safe, comfortable space for their socially distant meetup.

SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our community partners and sponsors for their continued support.
Your generosity makes a real and lasting impact on our community!



Your donation to Safe Harbors transforms lives!

Show your support for Safe Harbors of the Hudson and help us continue to fulfill our mission:
Transforming Lives and Building Community through Housing and the Arts.

Make a donation and make a difference today!

Visit our website www.safe-harbors.org for simple online giving.



Thank you to the following generous sponsors, foundations and individuals for their continued support!

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Consider leaving a legacy to help sustain Safe Harbors. Call Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan at (845) 769-9393 or e-mail admin@cfoc-ny.org.

Join our Mailing List

To receive e-updates on news and events for Safe Harbors of the Hudson visit our website, call (845) 784-1109, or send an e-mail request to gbabbage@safe-harbors.org.

Become a Volunteer!

Safe Harbors has a variety of volunteer opportunities. We are seeking dependable, enthusiastic people interested in: marketing, development, special events, performing and visual arts, GED tutoring and computer class instruction. For more information call (845) 784-1107 or e-mail jtraugot@safe-harbors.org.

Vision for The Ritz

As Safe Harbors completes the design phase for a reimagined Ritz, a bold vision for a transformative cultural anchor emerges! Now, the team will begin to strategically phase the redevelopment into a manageable project. Stay tuned as Safe Harbors continues to burnish this Newburgh gem!

