



# River Tree Arts

Annual Report  
June 22, 2020

# Presidents Update

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This year has proved to be one for the history books! Just as River Tree Arts was settling into a rhythm with successful programming and events serving our community, we, and the rest of the world, were thrown a curve ball called COVID-19.

As we transition into 2021, and prepare as best we can for the new normal, we will inevitably rely on our students and partners to remain patient and flexible with us. The organization will welcome a new President to the Board of Directors, Paula Gagnon. I am confident that she will lead with wisdom and gratitude.

Over the past six years that I have served the organization, I am most proud of the cultural shift we accomplished. There was a moment in 2016 where a small group of us decided to focus on gratitude. We changed the way we worked together, engaged with our faculty, and served the community. By recognizing how fortunate we were to be a part of such a wonderful community, to have dedicated space to create art, and a commitment from so many individuals and organizations who wanted to see us succeed, we were able to turn River Tree Arts back into a flourishing community arts center!

I am confident that even with the new challenges the world must face as a result of the pandemic, River Tree Arts, will continue to move forward and grow while bringing our mission statement to life in creative and unconventional ways for years to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Maureen DiGiovanni".

Maureen DiGiovanni, President of RTA Board of Directors

# Our Mission

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## *Where Creativity Inspires Community*

River Tree Arts' mission is to bring the joy and benefits of music, theater, and visual art to everyone in our community, regardless of age, income, or prior experience.



The board and faculty of River Tree Arts are committed to the development of our students, pushing them to new heights, and enabling them to make a positive impact on the world around them.

We believe the arts are crucial to the process of building community, and therefore we foster opportunities for people to come together to create, learn and celebrate.

# Our History

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RTA was founded in 1982 by a group of like-minded musicians in Kennebunkport, Maine. The donation of an Elmont S. Tyndale piano, coupled with international concert performers summering in the Kennebunks who needed a place to rehearse, and an acoustically inviting church sanctuary were the ingredients for the beginning of a summer concert series. It was from the double apple tree bordering the Kennebunk River that the newly formed organization took its name.

Like many organizations, River Tree Arts has evolved over the years:

- ❖ We are now a multi-disciplinary arts center featuring both performing and visual arts and offering a wide array of workshops, private instruction, performances and events
- ❖ We have resided in several locations throughout the community prior to settling into our home at 35 Western Avenue, a move made possible by the generous donation of the property by Andrea Irvine
- ❖ River Tree continues to now serve over 700 students per year providing over 3100 hours of instruction
- ❖ We are a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and the oldest community arts center in the State of Maine

# Programs Offered

## Performing Arts

- Music
  - Voice
  - Piano
  - String
  - Woodwind
  - Brass
  - Percussion
- Theater
- Dance

## Visual Arts

- Painting
- Drawing
- Metalsmithing
- Jewelry Making
- Photography
- Pottery
- Ceramics
- Sewing



- ❖ Children's programming includes focus on all arts disciplines and creative learning such as after-school programs, weekend workshops, and summer camps
- ❖ Adult courses include Music and Visual Arts and are offered to students of all levels of experience
- ❖ Classes, workshops and private instruction are available for all disciplines
- ❖ Scholarships are also available to students in need

# Meet Our Team

## Faculty

- ❖ Marrick Auger – Visual Art
- ❖ Alice Carroll – Visual Art
- ❖ Piper Castles – Visual Art
- ❖ Jefferson Coniaris – Visual Art
- ❖ McKenzie Davidson – Visual Art
- ❖ Gayle Fitzpatrick – Visual Art
- ❖ Tina Fischer – Visual Art
- ❖ Barbara Fraser – Music
- ❖ Jackie Grigg - Music
- ❖ Angela Hamel Russell – Dance
- ❖ Lucy Hardy – Visual Art
- ❖ Lauren Hastings – Music
- ❖ Megan Holtham – Ceramics
- ❖ Laurel Jordan – Theater
- ❖ Heather Lewis - Visual Art
- ❖ Conor Linehan - Music
- ❖ Caren-Marie Michel – Visual Art
- ❖ Dolly Nguyen – Dance
- ❖ Brigid Rankowski – Visual Art
- ❖ Georgia Renfroe – Visual Artist
- ❖ Brendan Roddy – Ceramics
- ❖ Serina Ruggeri – Visual Art
- ❖ Abbeth Russell – Visual Art
- ❖ Samuel Smithwick – Music
- ❖ Shelby Trondle - Theater
- ❖ Lindsay Waller – Music
- ❖ Russel Whitten – Visual Art



## Staff

- ❖ Cathryn Majorossy – Programming
- ❖ Kym Mabee – Operations
- ❖ Emma Collins – Volunteer Coordinator
- ❖ Rae Ingwersen – Reception (Retired)
- ❖ Tina Fischer - Development
- ❖ Mari Mattuccio – Bookkeeping

## Board of Directors

- ❖ Maureen DiGiovanni – President
- ❖ Paula Gagnon – Vice President
- ❖ Meg Parkhurst – Secretary
- ❖ Mark DiGiovanni – Treasurer
- ❖ Alice Eagleson – Director
- ❖ Cindy Kennie – Director
- ❖ Dan Nelson – Director
- ❖ Erin St. Jean – Director
- ❖ Sarah Smith – Director
- ❖ Feadora Stancioff - Director
- ❖ Matt Wilson – Director
- ❖ Dorothy Matheson – Member Emeritus

# Rae Ingwersen

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Earlier this month Rae Ingwersen retired after 12 years working with River Tree Arts.

She has worn many hats: closet cleaner, room organizer, bus greeter, receptionist, special event volunteer, gallery committee member, featured artist.

But to those who have had the pleasure to work alongside of her she will always be remembered as a trusted advisor, a wise mentor, and an honest friend.

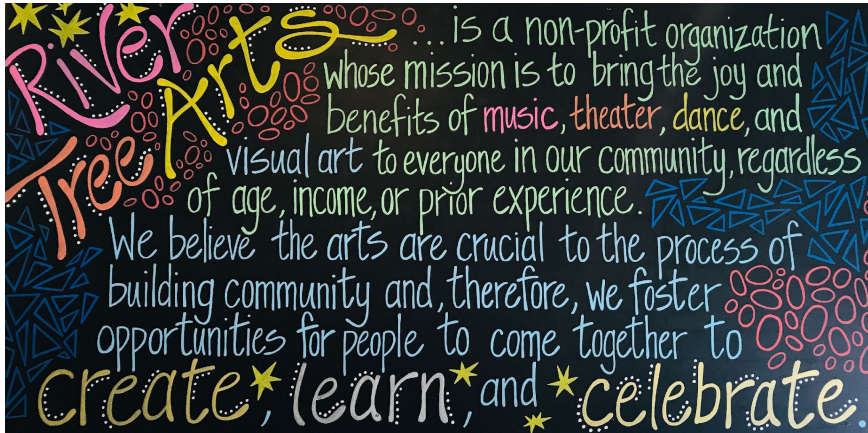
When we re-open our doors we will miss her smile and her kindness. Rae brought a sense of calm and perspective to River Tree Arts that will be impossible to replace.

The organization is truly in a better place because of her hard work and dedication. We wish her nothing but the best in her next chapter.

Congratulations, Rae, and THANK YOU for everything!



# 2020 Highlights



## Growth & Impact

- ❖ Consistent growth across all programs with new class offerings, more workshops and specialized opportunities for children, teens and adults
- ❖ Focus on improving long standing programs and making changes that include more students and new audiences
- ❖ Commitment to strengthening our infrastructure with committees and building improvements
- ❖ **Our impact across the community continues to grow**

## Program and Infrastructure Growth

- ❖ Cathryn Majorossy and Kym Mabee proved their working partnership was successful! Faculty newsletters were regularly circulated, new class and workshop offerings were featured at each session throughout the year, new teachers were hired, and student enrollment was booming in 2020.
- ❖ Volunteer database established and maintained
- ❖ Scholarship committee reestablished to serve more students throughout the community and across programs
- ❖ Building committee focusing on strategic plan for upcoming building improvements
- ❖ Gallery committee is actively engaged with local artist community to create new opportunities for shows and successful events which feature River Tree Arts



# COVID-19

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## □ Impacts

- All classes were suspended in mid-March
- Music and Dance transitioned to virtual lessons for the remainder of the session
- Spring Term II was canceled entirely

## □ Grants

- Virginia Hodgkins Somers Foundation funded an initial payroll gap while we determined how to move forward with spring classes
- United Way funded multiple virtual art programs for children and teens which included free materials for students

## □ Creative Solutions

- Transitioned our spring offering of Adult Clay to Clay at Home (2 sessions)
- Provided Facebook Live stand alone art lessons for children
- Offering several virtual classes for adults and children: painting, watercolors, journaling, summer art
- Registration is now open for summer outdoor dance camps and virtual music lessons
- Youth Art Contest is happening now! Theme: Summer Love
- The spring Faculty & Member Show was recreated into a virtual fundraiser, The Singular Works Show, which showcased 13 River Tree Arts faculty and staff members
- Annual Fundraiser in September will still take place virtually

# Meet Our Sponsors

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MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY  
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Andrea Mabee Photography  
[www.andreamabeephotography.com](http://www.andreamabeephotography.com)

THANK YOU  
to our Sponsors!



# Programming Update



## ◆ Highlight – Strong student enrollment

- ❑ Dance maintained its substantial growth with another 120 enrollments
- ❑ Music has had continued strong music enrollment with 100 students for the year
- ❑ Over 30 camps in 2019 with most sessions at capacity
- ❑ All 10 Early Release Wednesday workshops sold out, including specialized workshops for Pre-K students
- ❑ Hosted Toddler-Time, a free, drop-in, weekly program from November - March
- ❑ Hired 3 new teachers in the areas of music, comic strip drawing, and knitting
- ❑ Based on popular demand we added more ceramics classes for children, teens, and adults
- ❑ Expanded teen/adult programs to include additional drawing and sewing opportunities and introduced knitting
- ❑ Christmas Prelude programming added weekday craft sessions to compliment our weekend offerings which grew to include an artisan market, gallery show, and a popular wreath making workshop

## ◆ Looking ahead to next year with a focus on safety

- ❑ Establish a committee of faculty, staff, and board members to work over the summer on what programming will look like for the upcoming academic year
- ❑ Install proper COVID-19 safety precautions throughout our facility in order to welcome students and faculty back inside
- ❑ Partner with community organizations to utilize alternate spaces for classes
- ❑ Continue virtual music lessons and art workshops when preferred
- ❑ Consider unconventional scheduling and a hybrid of virtual and in-person class formats



# Financial Update

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## 2020 Highlights:

- ❖ We continued our positive momentum with a net operating income for the year of \$2K, a significant number given the impacts of COVID-19
- ❖ This is the fourth straight year of a net income gain while continuing to pay down our debt on the facility
- ❖ Over the past year we grew our programming revenue (12%) which was highlighted by increases in Dance (25%) and Children's Programming (20%)
- ❖ Programming revenues are significant in that they support ongoing operations and sustainability and make us less reliant on external donations which continues to decrease as a % of overall revenue

## 2021 Financial Goals:

- ❖ Goal is to finalize budget for Fiscal Year by August 2020 once programming for the next school year is determined
- ❖ Anticipate operating at our near break even with reliance on grants to assist with operating costs



# Fundraising and Grants

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## Prior Year Highlights

- ❖ Total fundraising income of \$61,000 in FY 2020
- ❖ This number represents an increase over FY2019 but fell short of budgeted target
- ❖ Several grants also awarded for COVID-19 related funding which were following the completion of our fiscal year
- ❖ Tina Fischer has recently been added to the fundraising and grants team to strengthen our grant writing ability

## Looking ahead to 2021

- ❖ FY 2021 Fundraising & Grants Budget estimated to be \$75,000
- ❖ Targeted goals for our grants committee include the following:
  - Scholarship funding
  - Required COVID-19 safety precautions
  - Funding to support fixed expenses
  - Building improvements (exterior improvements)
  - Strengthening our private donations
  - Growing our membership base

# Marketing

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## Marketing Highlights

- ❖ Improved marketing and social media presence contributed to an increase in program enrollment and revenue
- ❖ Marketing initiatives include:
  - ❑ Social Media growth: FB 2,300 followers, IG reached 1,000 followers, YouTube channel growing strong
  - ❑ Monthly Email Newsletters with continuous upward trending open and click-through rates
  - ❑ Quarterly RTA faculty newsletter
  - ❑ Regularly featured in local publications: Tourist&Town, The Village, Neighbors of the Kennebunks
  - ❑ Featured in multiple Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Arundel Chamber of Commerce newsletters
  - ❑ Events highlighted across a variety of online sites including GoKennebunks.com, EventBrite and Google Business

## Marketing Goals

- ❖ Tap into new markets including: realtors for summer programs, online listings, community partnerships
- ❖ Enhance website including Customer Login Portal, photo galleries, and user reviews
- ❖ Leverage our improved marketing platform to support growth of our faculty, board, and volunteer base

# Our Success Depends on Our Community

- ❖ Donate to RTA
- ❖ Sign up for a membership
- ❖ Enroll in a class
- ❖ Attend events
- ❖ Join a committee
  - ❑ Finance, fundraising, events, grants, building, membership
- ❖ Become a regular volunteer
  - ❑ Reception, organizational support, building upkeep
- ❖ Apply for a board position



# Election of New Officers

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## □ President: Paula Gagnon

- Paula was born in upstate New York and moved to Maine with her family when she was in the sixth grade. After college and graduate school she began her career in Higher Education and moved several times to accept positions of more responsibility. From Maine to Wisconsin to Florida to Minnesota to Vermont and eventually back to Maine she worked her way up to a Deans position and eventually settled in Maine at York County Community College as the Dean of Students and became the Vice President and Academic Dean in 2004. Paula retired in 2019. Paula loves the coast of Maine and enjoys biking, kayaking, photography and socializing with good friends.

## □ Vice President: Meg Parkhurst

- Meg is the Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools with RSU21. She is entering her 18th year in education. She has previously been a classroom teacher, assistant principal, and also worked as an Educational Consultant in southern Maine providing coaching and professional development for teachers. Meg is a native of New York and holds a Bachelor's Degree from Smith College in Economics and Education and a Master's Degree from University of Southern Maine in Educational Leadership. Meg is currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Southern Maine. Meg lives in Kennebunk with her husband and three children. All three have been involved at various points with River Tree Arts.

## □ Treasurer: Mark DiGiovanni

- Mark is a management consultant, entrepreneur, and Founding Partner of ATX Advisory Services which is a management and technology consulting firm based in Biddeford. Prior to founding ATX, Mark was a Director of Advisory Services for RSM. Mark serves as an advisor to several non-profits and also volunteers his time coaching youth athletics. He is passionate about youth education and development and credits his ability to develop and articulate solutions to complex problems with his exposure to music and graphic arts during his youth. Mark and his wife Maureen have five children and reside in Kennebunk where they are active patrons of River Tree Arts.

## □ Secretary: Alice Eagleson

- Alice holds a bachelor's degree in Art History from Princeton University and an MBA from the Haas School of Business at the UC Berkeley. Her professional experience includes consulting at Deloitte Consulting and product management at Del Monte Foods. After moving to Maine in 2003, she rekindled her passion for the arts while working in the Registrar's office at the Portland Museum of Art. She spent 11 years working at TD Bank in various roles, including digital channels and most recently, as a Senior Marketing Manager. In her free time, Alice enjoys tennis, skiing and spending time with her family. She lives in Kennebunk with her husband, Dave, a Kennebunk native, her son, Will, who takes guitar lessons at River Tree Arts, and her daughter Brooke a future River Tree Arts student.



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