



Annual Report

River Tree Arts
June 22, 2021

President's Update -- Paula Gagnon

Becoming the President during a global pandemic was not something anyone plans. Thankfully staff, faculty and our community partners were there to help River Tree begin to offer our classes again after the shutdown. Initially we had to depend on virtual and outdoor offerings and finally we were able to open our building and offer face to face classes again. Thanks to the attention to safety of our staff River Tree put a schedule together that saw smaller class sizes, social distancing, masks and additional sanitizing procedures.

The staff and faculty worked hard to make things work and our students and parents cooperated to make our classes successful. With a reduction in tuition revenues the Board members stepped in to solicit donations and apply for grants. Together with a Board that made some tough financial decisions and a Treasurer who managed the various COVID federal and state programs we have kept the doors to River Tree open.

Now it's time to gradually and safely increase our course offerings and begin to enjoy the New normal.

Our Mission

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

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 older 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

Our 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
- ❖ Laurel Jordan – Theater
- ❖ Heather Lewis



- ❖ Conor Linehan - Music
- ❖ Caren-Marie Michel – Visual Art
- ❖ Dolly Nguyen – Dance
- ❖ 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 & Board

Staff

- ❖ Cathryn Majorossy – Director
- ❖ Kym Mabee – Operations
- ❖ Mari Mattuccio – Bookkeeping

Board of Directors

- ❖ Paula Gagnon– President
- ❖ Meg Parkhurst – Vice President
- ❖ Cindy Kennie – Secretary
- ❖ Mark DiGiovanni – Treasurer
- ❖ Alice Eagleson – Director
- ❖ Dan Nelson – Director
- ❖ Erin St. Jean – Director
- ❖ Nicholas Howley - Director
- ❖ Tina Fischer - Director
- ❖ Kiersten Wilcox - Director
- ❖ Rae Ingwersen - Director
- ❖ Katie Ryan-Fairbanks - Director
- ❖ Maureen DiGiovanni - Member Emeritus
- ❖ Dorothy Matheson – Member Emeritus



Meet Our Sponsors -- Thank you!



Marketing Update

- ❖ Social Media growth, FB 2500 followers, IG 1200 followers, YouTube
- ❖ Monthly email newsletter, upward trending open and click through rates
- ❖ Quarterly RTA Faculty Newsletter
- ❖ Regularly featured in local publications, Tourist & Town, The Village
- ❖ Featured in several Chamber of Commerce Newsletters
- ❖ Events highlighted across a variety of sites including GoKennebunks.com, EventBrite, Google Business

Goals

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



PROGRAMMING UPDATE

- ❖ Offered free summer youth programs in 2020 with over 150 participants, funded by a United Way grant
- ❖ Ran successful outdoor adult art programs and virtual Clay at Home
- ❖ Reopened in person youth classes as of fall 2020. Majority ran at capacity
- ❖ Dance virtual sessions with strong enrollment. Over 90 enrollments each session
- ❖ Music lessons were virtual for Fall 2020 and in person or virtual Winter/Spring 2021
- ❖ 30 summer camps for 2021, these include art, dance, theater, metalsmithing, sewing and clay
- ❖ Partnered with local venues for off-site workshops for both children and adults

Building Committee

- ❖ Focused on prioritizing needs to protect asset
 - Gutters and fascia
 - Clay room exit
 - Cupola
 - Art room exit and retaining wall
 - Indoor cosmetic needs heat covers, lighting improvements

- ❖ Estimating future building needs





Financial Update - 2021 Highlights

- ❖ Gross revenues for Fiscal Year 2021 (Year ending 04/30/2021) totalled \$274K
- ❖ Program revenue was down approximately 35% due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- ❖ Fundraising and grant revenue was up 65% over prior years as we were able to proactively seek funding to address decreases in our program revenues
- ❖ We reduced our operating expenses approximately 30% in parallel with our reduced programming
- ❖ The net effect for the calendar year was a net income gain of approximately \$30K
- ❖ This marks the fifth straight year of a net income gain while continuing to pay down our debt on the facility



Financial Update - 2022 Goals

- ❖ We are actively working on the budget for this Fiscal Year which we expect to finalize by August once programming for the next school year is determined
- ❖ Net income gains from 2021 will help to fund our emergence from the pandemic and some investment back into our facility
- ❖ We anticipate growth of our programs as we emerge from the pandemic along with an increase in our operating expenses to pre-pandemic levels
- ❖ Programming revenues are significant in that they support ongoing operations and sustainability and make us less reliant on external donations

Gallery Committee

- ❖ Continued to re-establish and forge connections between River Tree Arts, the Galleries, and the local arts community
 - “Highlight” community art show, low/no commission rates on sales, etc.
- ❖ 2020’s Small Works Fundraiser and Winter Fundraiser generated \$9,700.
 - The goal for this year’s Small Works Fundraiser is to raise \$10,000



Gallery Committee, cont.

- ❖ Rivertreegallery.org was established as a stand-alone site
 - Goals for this included:
 - The additional of an e-commerce platform to augment sales
 - Creating a dedicated space for the galleries to grow from

- ❖ Establishment of the Micro Gallery spaces - a permanent space for the visual arts to be on display year-round at River Tree.
 - First official show will include Angelique Luro starting July 2021



**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 3RD
6PM - 8PM**



Fundraising and Grants

❖ Grants received from:

- VHS, YMCA York County, Maine Arts Commission, DEavid Dionne Charitable Trust, Tommy MacNamara Foundation, Onion Foundation, Nichols Fund for a total of over \$46,000.
- Federal/State funds during Covid were received from PPP, Maine Economic Recovery and Southern Maine Planning and Development
- Annual Appeal and Art Show, almost \$20,000
- This total represents an increase of 65% in grants and fundraising.

❖ Looking ahead we plan to:

- **Continue with Annual Appeal and improve it**
- **Grow our Membership**
- **Increase our sponsors**
- **Strengthen private donations**
- **Strategically work with other committees to prioritize River Tree needs**

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



Vote to Ratify New Board Members

★ **Tina Fischer** – August 2020 - Development Committee

- Tina is a writer with a focus on telling the stories of Maine artisans and entrepreneurs for various publications. This past spring she began assisting River Tree with grant applications. Tina has worked to support the arts in various ways, including being a docent at the Portland Museum of Art and by creating expanded arts opportunities for elementary school students. She also enjoys sharing the joy of making through teaching knitting to teens and adults, and this past winter began teaching adult knitting classes at River Tree.

★ **Kiersten Wilcox** – August 2020 - Gallery Committee

- Originally from Southport, CT, Kiersten holds her BA in Art History from Bucknell University and her Masters in Arts Administration from Savannah College of Art and Design. In 2011 Kiersten moved to Jackson Hole, WY where she began a successful career as an art consultant. She worked with clients from across the world helping them acquire new and exciting works for their homes and collections. Kiersten also volunteered her time as the President of the Jackson Hole Gallery Association and as a board member for the Jackson Hole Fall Arts Festival. Kiersten left Jackson in 2019 to move to Kennebunkport, where she founded KW Contemporary Art.

★ **Nicholas Howley** – September 2020 - Gallery Committee Chair

- Nick is a technology and data enthusiast and works full-time as CRM manager and data analyst for Optimizely, an international digital experience platform. Outside of his full-time work Nick partners with local artists and small organizations to help them grow their online presence through website and social media development. Over the course of the last two years he has worked as part of the Gallery Committee and now chairs the committee - leading the team through a variety of projects and fundraising events.

Vote to Ratify New Board Members, cont.

★ **Rae Ingwersen** – March 2021 - Building Committee Chair

- Rae is an immigrant from Scotland, via Canada., coming to Kennebunk in 1977, with husband and two very young children. She worked in the special education field in the local schools for eleven years and twelve years or so at R.T.A. After her children were grown I returned to my passion -art and that was a good fit.

★ **Katie Ryan-Fairbanks** – March 2021 - Art School Committee

- Katherine Ryan-Fairbanks, originally from Boston, MA holds a B.A. in Latin American Studies and Secondary Education from The University of Vermont. After living abroad as an ESL teacher in Chile, Belize, Peru and France she attended The New England School of Photography. While in photography school she worked at UNICEF assisting on both the Trick-or-Treat and greeting card campaigns. In 2006 Ryan-Fairbanks opened her studio, Katherine Jane Photography specializing in family portraits & weddings. Her work has been published in The Knot, Boston Magazine, Bride, Expecting Mom and Seacoast Weddings.

If you are interested in finding out more about how to get involved or would like more information about the Board of Directors at River Tree Arts, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee: [Cindy Kennie](#) or [Meg Parkhurst](#).

Election of New Officers

❖ 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. Prior to founding ATX, Mark was a Director of Advisory Services for RSM McGladrey. 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: Cindy Kennie

- Cindy is the director of operations for the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association ([NERRA](#)) where she works in partnership NOAA and 29 Reserve sites around the country which are dedicated to the effective science-based management of coastal and estuarine environments. She is a native of New England and lives with her family on the beautiful Maine coast.

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