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UUID: 9CFC1FF7-7773-4899-81B5-6172221C79F9

Recommended Citation:

Turner Center for the Arts. "Turner Center Binder 12 2015-2022." *Turner Center for the Arts Scrapbook Collection*, Valdosta State University Archives and Special Collections, Valdosta, Georgia. <https://hdl.handle.net/10428/7101>

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32nd annual

SPRING INTO ART

exhibition



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32nd Annual Spring
Into Art Gallery
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229-247-2787 | 527 N. Patterson St. Valdosta | turnercenter.org



Artist Mary VanLandingham wins best in show with her painting 'The Last Day' at the 32nd Annual Spring Into Art opening gala in early April

FILE PHOTO | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

BY AMANDA M. USHER
amanda.usher@gafnews.com

Overcoming

'The thing is if you don't put in the work, another artist will.'

Mary VanLandingham

Obstacles

Painter finds passion, purpose in art

NASHVILLE — Throughout Mary VanLandingham's life, art has always been present.

It's been a constant, even during those moments when she has been discouraged.

"I've always loved art, even when I was a kid, always doing crafts," she said. "It was just something that was kind of clear that it was something I was going to be interested in."

Art wasn't a serious career path for the 25-year-old until her college years.

She was unsure how to transform her passion into a career and admits she thought she didn't have the skills to be a professional artist.

After changing majors a few times, and briefly leaving college to explore other options, VanLandingham graduated last spring with a bachelor of arts in fine arts.

"At the time, you kind of feel like a bit of a failure, but it's all a part of the plan," she said.

"I'd gotten to a point in my life when I just wanted to do what made me happy regardless of how it would end up professionally."

It was that first semester after returning to college that she knew she made the right decision.

"I found where I was supposed to be," she said.

College is where VanLandingham began oil painting. She creates her paintings from photographs that she takes herself.

Interiors and landscapes inspire the artist, who also likes to paint scenes she sees while on day trips to other places.

"I'll get really excited about

something that I saw, something that I've photographed and that will kind of keep me motivated," she said.

"That's what kind of gets me to the studio every day is photographing new things."

VanLandingham said her creativity stems from an initial sight of something, stating she sees her paintings before she even takes the photographs.

Skills such as applying brush strokes and mixing colors comes naturally, the artist said.

While a Valdosta State Uni-

versity student, VanLandingham expanded her talent by interning with local painter Steven S. Walker.

Under his guidance, she learned about the business side of artistry — marketing, networking, submitting profiles and framing.

"All of these were so essential," VanLandingham said. "I was doing these things for him, but at the same time, it was stuff that I needed to know how to do for myself."

It was while interning for

Walker that she had her work featured in the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts for the first time.

Some of her pieces were displayed at Turner in November 2017, and again, this past January for Turner's DrawProject.

Most recently, VanLandingham was named the 32nd Annual Spring Into Art best in show winner with her oil painting "The Last Day."

The painting is reminiscent of a southern Ireland town VanLandingham visited while abroad

for the first time.

"It had the most beautiful little cafes and pubs and I took this picture that I used to reference for 'The Last Day,'" she said in a past interview, "and I just fell in love with the colors in front of it, and I had to paint it."

Following her internship with Walker, she took advantage of an opportunity to visit Ireland as his assistant. Walker was leading a plein air workshop.

"I'm more of a studio artist, but it was still a wonderful experience," VanLandingham said. "It got me out of my comfort zone."

Alongside best in show in Spring Into Art, she recently won a judge's choice award in a Key West, Fla., small works competition.

Other accolades include second place in a Thomasville contest.

"That was kind of like one of my first wins out of college, so that was kind of really exciting," she said.

In January 2020, VanLandingham plans to host a solo show in one of Turner's galleries with a Georgia-themed collection. She titled it "On My Mind."

There are still times when she gets discouraged, but her support system sees her through these times. They are her parents, coworkers at the library and mentors.

VanLandingham would like to continue entering art shows and become a more full-time artist.

She advises aspiring artists to work hard on their craft, even if it's for one hour per day.

"The thing is if you don't put in the work, another artist will," she said, "and that artist is going to get the successes. They're going to be able to make the strides."

VanLandingham says "give it your all."



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Artist Mary VanLandingham does plein air painting while in Ireland.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Artist Mary VanLandingham creates oil paintings from photographs in her home studio.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Artist Mary VanLandingham paints in her home studio.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Perry High School students visit the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

Perry High students visit Turner Center for Arts

VALDOSTA — Nearly two dozen students from Perry High School recently visited the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

The AP students and teacher Cathy Heller traveled by bus to Valdosta to view the Youth Art Month exhibition and more specifically the 2019 VSU Invitational High School Art Competition in the center's

MORE INFO

For more information on local arts, visit www.turnercenter.org.

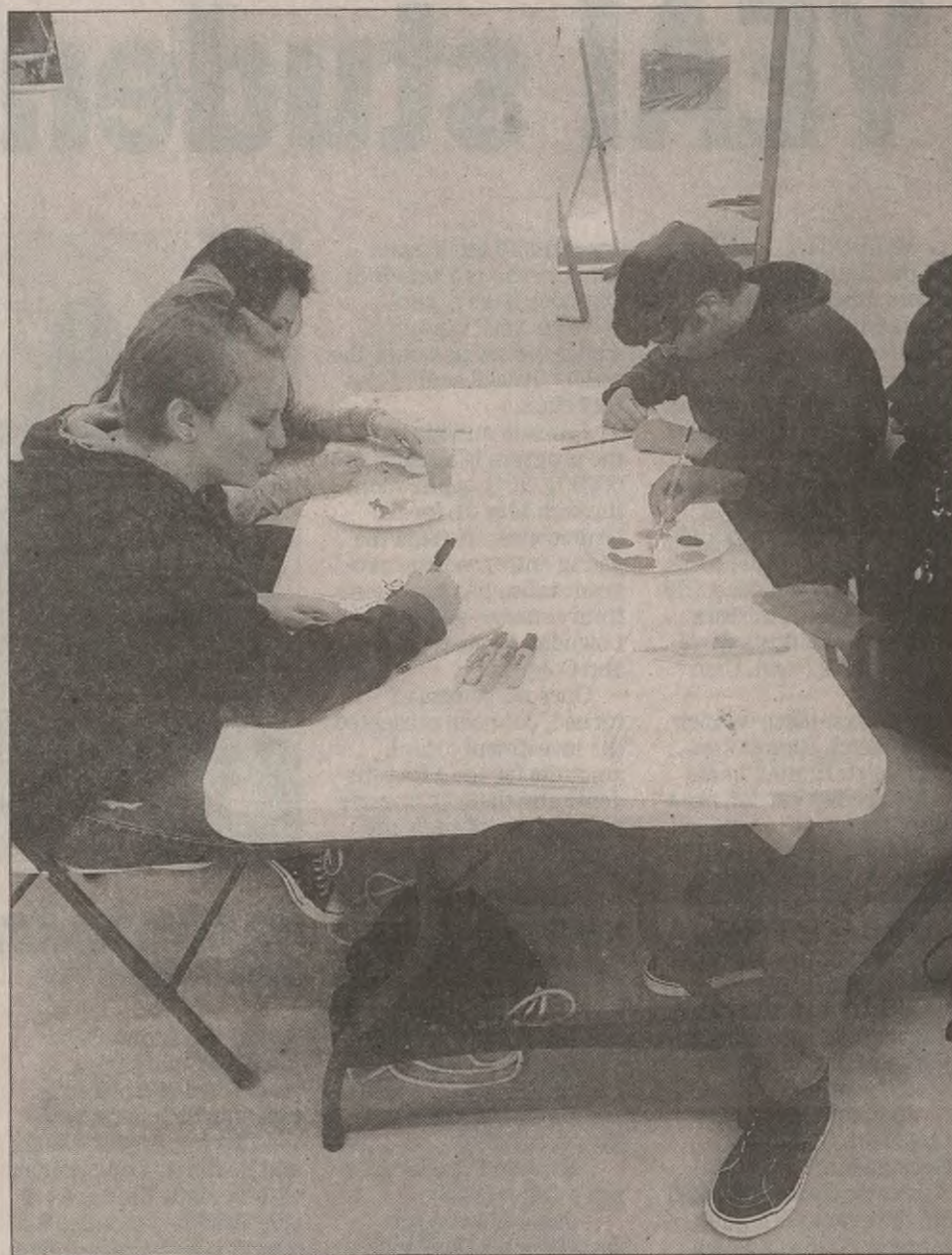
galleries.

While at the arts center, students were treated by staff to a Black-Out Poetry workshop, which taught the students that art can effectively tell a story and

is compelling, interesting and engaging, center representatives said.

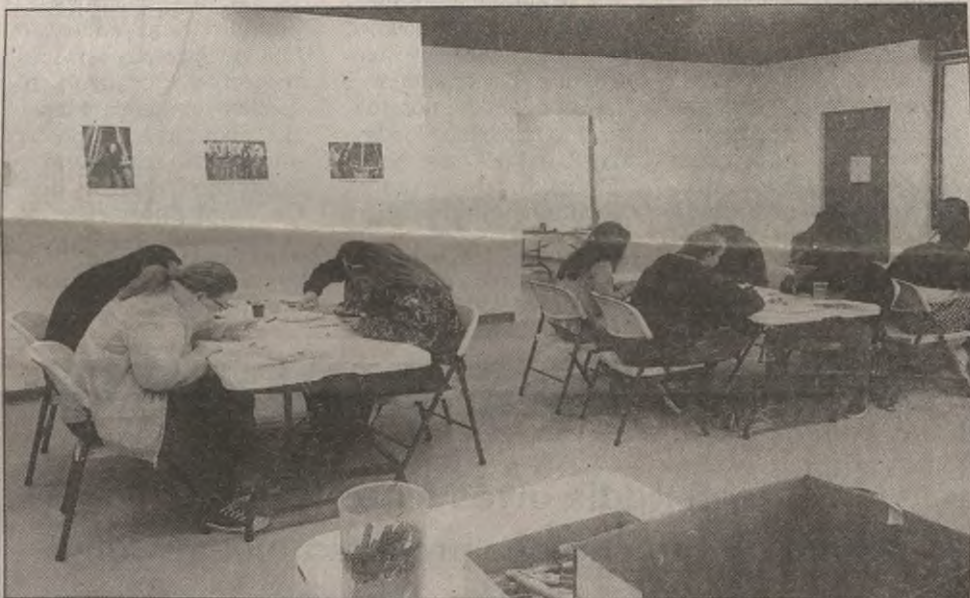
Heller and her students traveled more than 125 miles to visit the art center, evidence of the regional impact the Turner Center has on the local and state arts industry, center representatives said.

For more information on local arts, visit www.turnercenter.org.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Perry High students participate in a workshop at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Perry High students participate in a workshop at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

submit entries to the Valdosta Daily Times calendar, submit dates to our online calendar at valdostadailytimes.com, or send it to vdt.calendar@gafnews.com.

19 FRIDAY

RoshambeauX: 9 p.m., Ashley Street Station, 607 Bay-tree Road.

Splash Island Nights Out of this World: 7-10 p.m., Wild Adventures Theme Park, 3766 Old Clyattville Road. Join us for a pool party that is out of this world. Enjoy the hottest music from DJ LEE at the coolest poolside dance party. Plus enjoy activities, great prizes and your favorite water rides under the stars. Special events like these are free with park admission or season passes.

Indigo Dyeing Workshop: 1-5 p.m., Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. The Friday class focuses on Sashiko and Saturday class is Shibori. Registration is available for one or both classes at turnercenter.org. For more information on indigo dyeing and Sashiko stitching, visit aaronshandersonhead.com. The Saturday class is from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. The cost to attend is between \$100-\$125.

20 SATURDAY

Break Bread Bun Run: 7:30 a.m., YMCA parking lot, 2424 Gornito Road. First Presbyterian Church of Valdosta invites you to join our annual Break Bread Bun Run. Registration forms are available at turnercenter.org.

ing, fellowship, food, fun games and free clothes giveaway. The first 15 people to donate blood will receive a free gift.

Tracie Mattox: 6-9:30 p.m., Woodstack BBQ Tavern, 4038 N. Valdosta Road. Come catch live music at Woodstack BBQ Tavern.

21 SUNDAY

Dodgeball Tournament: First match is 9 a.m., check-in is 8:30 a.m., Valdosta High School, 4590 Inner Perimeter Road. There will be a DJ, music, concessions, raffles, carnival, games and a half-court shot contest. The cost is \$150 for teams. Proceeds will benefit LAMP. To register, visit www.lampinc.org/dodgeball-tournament.

Crazy For You: 3 p.m., Valdosta State University Sawyer Theatre, 1500 N. Patterson St. This musical featuring songs by George & Ira Gershwin, is a rich-boy-meets-home-town-girl romantic comedy, and is very family friendly.

Restorative Yoga: 4-5 p.m., EnSpire Counseling & Wellness, 3790 Old U.S. Highway 41 N. Join us for restorative yoga/yin at our mental health and wellness facility. The cost is \$12 per person and \$10 for military and students. Call our office at (229)262-1000.

22 MONDAY

Valdosta Trivia Rama: 8 p.m., Bleu Pub, 116 W. Hill Ave. Come for random trivia on the big screen. There

making, macrame and other hands-on crafts. Students and parents are encouraged to take advantage of the "buy two sessions, get the third free" promotion, which will allow students to bring their lunches and spend their day at the center. This is a week-long camp.

Arts and Crafts Summer

Camp: 9 a.m.-noon, Cottonwood Market and Boutique, 123 N. Ashley St. Come get artsy and crafty in the studio with Ms. Taylor. There are a lot of cool nature-themed creations to come. This is for boys and girls ages 6-10. Snacks are provided. Spots are limited to 15 children and will fill quickly. Camp runs from Monday-Thursday and costs \$95 for all four days.

23 TUESDAY

Lowndes County Commission Meeting: 5:30-6 p.m., 327 N. Ashley St. The Lowndes County Board of Commissioners meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month. Their work session is always the Monday before the meeting at 8:30 a.m. on the second floor. All residents are encouraged to attend. The meetings are open to the public and allow for public comments.

Reformed University Fellowship: 7:30-10 p.m., Valdosta State University, 1500 N. Patterson St. RUF is the official campus ministry of the Presbyterian Church in America. RUF wants to create a fellowship of students where

Beer Co., 109 S. Briggs St. Geeks Who Drink brings the nation's best live-hosted pub quiz to Georgia Beer Co. every Wednesday. Join us for eight rounds of audio, visual and live-hosted trivia. Our weekly quiz is free to play, and we'll be giving away prizes for answering bonus questions and gift cards for our top teams at the end of the night. Geeks Who Drink rules limit the total number of players on your team to six, so gather your smartest friends and come down.

Free Yoga: 6 p.m., Turner

Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. This free yoga class is held every Wednesday.

Charcuterie and Wine

Wednesday: 5-9 p.m., Friends Grille and Bar, 3338 Country Club Road. Every Wednesday at Friends Grille and Bar is Charcuterie Night. This meat and cheese board is ever-changing, and our experienced bar staff also hand selects four wines every Wednesday for a wine flight to pair with the board. A single tasting or a table tasting is available.

UPCOMING

16th Annual Biker Fest for Kids: 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., July 27, Martin Luther King Park, Lakeland, Ga. This event is sponsored by Second 2 None Riders of Lakeland, Ga. There will be fun, food, motorcycles and more. For more information or to help sponsor the event, call Willie Carter at (229) 244-4527 or (229) 292-

3083 or Larry Bazin at (229) 325-4892.

Beating Diabetes Meeting:

10 a.m., July 27, Chancy Drugs Valdosta Classroom, 2333 N. Ashley St. For more information, call (229) 245-9922.

Back 2 School Bash: noon-3

p.m., Aug. 3, Brooks County Courthouse Gazebo, 100 E. Screven St., Quitman, Ga. This event is hosted by the Brooks County Resource Center. There will be free food, music, prizes, backpacks of a limited supplies and a silent auction. Attendees must register online at www.eventbrite.com. For more details, call (478) 551-2964 or info@borrkscountync.org.

National Health Center

Week Back to School Block Party Health Fair: 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Aug. 3, Boys & Girls Club Gym at the Brooks County Recreation Complex, 2337 Moultrie Road, Quitman, Ga. This event is sponsored by Primary Care of Southwest Georgia and the Quitman Brooks County Chamber of Commerce. There will be interactive activities with the youth, various children health providers, vendors, games, door prizes including four bicycles, bounce houses and much more. The event is free to the public.

Beating Diabetes Meeting:

10 a.m., Aug. 15, Chancy Drugs Valdosta Classroom, 2333 N. Ashley St. For more information, call (229) 245-9922.

Beating Diabetes Meeting:

10 a.m., Aug. 24, Chancy Drugs Valdosta Classroom, 2333 N. Ashley St. For more information, call (229) 245-9922.

A Touch of Class Southern

Soul Ball: 8 p.m., Aug. 31, Mathis City Auditorium, 2300 N. Ashley St. This event is presented by T Rose Productions. This is a fundraiser for cancer patients featuring Kenney Floyd, son of legend Eddie Floyd, M.C. & Comedy Jacko David, Southern Blues Artist Kami Cole, Country Soul Artist Melvin Morrison, Live 5 Bank and the Southern Blues Artist Mz Connie. The dress code is black tie formal. Tickets are \$45 in advance, \$50 at the door or \$60 reserve. Dinner includes two drinks, but more drinks can be purchased at the cash bar. Tickets may be purchased at Wayne Washington Salon, Sam's BBQ, V-Town, GQ Men's Wear or Looking Good. For more details, call (678) 973-8553 or email phobie814@gmail.com.

Beating Diabetes Meeting: 5

p.m., Sept. 10, Chancy Drugs Valdosta Classroom, 2333 N. Ashley St. For more information, call (229) 245-9922.

NCNW of Valdosta-Lowndes

Eighth Annual Community-wide Family Reunion: 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Sept. 21, Scott Park, 900 Old Statenville Road. There will be food, fun entertainment, activities, informational booths and vendors. For booth or vendor space, contact Yurshemna Flanders at (229) 234-2353 or email ncnwofvaldosta@gmail.com.

Beating Diabetes Meeting: 5

p.m., Sept. 26, Chancy Drugs Valdosta Classroom, 2333 N. Ashley St. For more information, call (229) 245-9922.

Turner kicks off Youth Art Month

BY AMANDA M. USHER

amanda.usher@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — As a focus on art education, Youth Art Month spotlights the works of students.

An opening reception will be held 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 24, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St.

Teachers from the South Georgia and North Florida regions will submit hundreds of students' artwork, which the teachers will install themselves.

Participating counties include Lowndes, Echols, Brooks, Lanier and Hamilton, Fla.

Cindy Lyons, art teacher at Lanier County Primary School and Lanier County Elementary School, has participated in Youth Art Month for more than 20 years.

She recalled her first year being involved with Youth Art Month in 1992. She said the show was held in a meeting room at the Valdosta-Lowndes Public Library on Woodrow Wilson Drive.

"This event is so important to me for many reasons," she said. "Youth Art Month is an opportunity to recognize the value of art and art education for all children and to encourage the public support for quality school arts programs."

Lanier County Schools will submit about 50 pieces, which will be exhibited as a "Sweet Art" project, where students drew and painted treats on canvases.

"Colorful cupcakes, ice cream cones, coke floats, snow cones and cakes are sure to make the viewers have sugar cravings," Lyons said. "The students were so inspired to create their favorite flavored desserts complete with many delicious toppings."

Heather Dorsey, art teacher at S.L. Mason Elementary School, has



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Spectators look at various pieces of artwork from Lowndes Middle School students during a previous Youth Art Month opening reception. The 2019 reception is scheduled for 2-4 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 24, at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

been involved with Youth Art Month for 15 years: two while at S.L. Mason, 11 while at Lowndes High School and two while at Dewar Elementary School.

Dorsey has previously worked behind the scenes of the exhibit when she was an art student at Valdosta State University.

"Many students that have their work on display have never been to an art gallery," she said. "It is such a great experience to not only go to an art center, but to go to an art center and see their own work on display."

"I hope that it impacts them to continue to make art by giving them confidence and pride in what

MORE INFO

Admission to the Youth Art Month reception is free. The Turner Center, 527 N. Patterson St., can be reached at (229) 247-2787 for more information.

they can create."

Bill Shenton, curator and artistic administrator for the Turner Center, agrees; the provides pride for the students.

"It gives them a point of pride in being able to point up on the wall and show their families their artwork," he said.

A feature of Youth Art Month is the Invitational High School Art Exhibit, partnering the Turner Center with VSU to display pieces from high school students.

Shenton said students receive the chance to be educated and learn more information about the university's programs and degrees.

VSU art faculty will judge the high school exhibit, and cash prizes will be given to the first-, second- and third-place winners.

Admission to the Youth Art Month reception is free. The Turner Center, 527 N. Patterson St., can be reached at (229) 247-2787 for more information.

ART: The exhibition is open for free to the public beginning April 9 until June 5

"I do more preparation for this work than other shows," he said.

With the center's Youth Art Month ending, all of the exhibition pieces will be removed for Spring into Art leaving 4,000 holes in the walls, all of which Shenton will patch himself.

He'll also wash and spot paint the walls. Complete

wall repair takes about three days.

The work put into preparing for the opening gala is appreciated by the community, Shenton said.

"The people who come out, even if they're regular visitors to the art center, always feel surprised with how great the art center looks," he said.

"We definitely hear the

praises from the people who come for just a few times a year to our regular people who are in here possibly every week. Even those people notice the extra effort we put in to make the art center look the best it's going to look all year."

Spring into Art affords artists the opportunity to share and sell their pieces,

Shenton said.

Event tickets are currently on sale for \$45 each and can be purchased by calling Turner at (229) 247-2787.

Admission is free for participating artists.

The exhibition is open for free to the public beginning April 9 until June 5. Visit turnercenter.org for more information.



Curator Bill Shenton assists with auctioning art pieces during the 2019 DrawProject held at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Turner Center brings art to life

BY THOMAS LYNN
tom.lynn@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Anyone walking into the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts earlier this month saw what a community that supports the arts locally looks like.

Semantha Mathews, executive director of the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, said nearly 1,000 pieces of youth art work adorned the walls of the art center galleries.

Teachers from more than 30 schools across the region submitted their students' art works for Youth Art Month, which is a testament to the love and commitment they have for enriching youth through the arts.

Youth Art Month is just one event on the calendar this year.

Mathews said center staff and board members have been working to provide three entertaining Presenter Series show, a successful Second Annual Food & Wine Classic, several concerts featuring local and international musical professionals, several gallery openings featuring regional artists and the continuation of the center's art education program.

These are experiences that locals and visitors alike can find on the arts calendar throughout the year.

The center is awaiting the 32nd Annual Spring Into Art exhibition on April 8, which will feature nearly 500 fine art works from regional artists, hundreds of art enthusiasts and a catered buffet by Covington's.

Thousands are expected to visit the center during the eight-week duration of the Spring Into Art exhibit. Staff accepted art entries through March 14; all works entered will be displayed on the gallery walls throughout the center.

Art enthusiasts may purchase their tickets to the event for \$45 each by calling the center at (229) 247-2787 or purchasing the tickets online at www.turnercenter.org.

"The Lowndes-Valdosta Arts Commission and the Turner Center for the Arts staff believe in the value of the arts and its ability to enrich the quality of life in our community," Mathews said. "We are so fortunate to live in a community with government leadership, businesses and individuals who share these beliefs and who support the arts finan-

cially throughout the year."

On Feb. 21, the center was part of the unveiling of the public art mural at the Valdosta Regional Airport. The Public Art Advisory Committee, funded by the city, commissioned local artist Ethan Abbott to paint a "Welcome to Valdosta" mural in the baggage claim area of the airport.

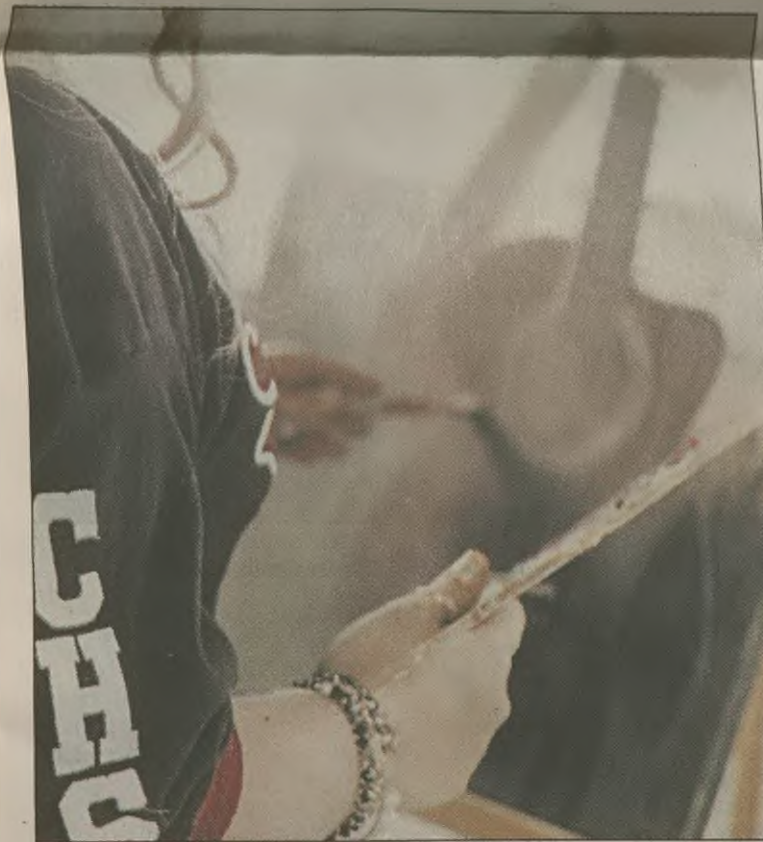
The mural features various iconic events and people within each letter of the word Valdosta. It's the first major piece of public art at the Valdosta Regional Airport, and it will welcome visitors and returning community members to the area when they retrieve their luggage.

Soon, summer will begin heating up.

Center staff has begun planning for more than a dozen art camps that will inspire youth to not be idle during their summer vacations. The art camps will be announced in April and will likely fill up quickly.

The Turner Center's weekly E-newsletter, called Art Talk, continues to share the updates to these classes and any other activities available at the center.

For more information, visit www.turnercenter.org.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Abigail Sadler, 17, is a sculptor and painter. She recently won the Youth Art Month high school competition event held at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Artist Mary VanLandingham sells her painting, 'Everyday is Saturday,' during the 2019 DrawProject held earlier this year at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

Festivals a sign of South Georgia's vitality

BY TERRY RICHARDS
terry.richards@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The lifeblood of South Georgia can be measured in festivals, celebrations and special events that highlight the area's rich culture, heritage and history.

Among the major celebrations for the area are:

• **Azalea Festival**

Held each March, the festival celebrates the abundant azaleas as well as the culture of Valdosta and Lowndes County.

The festival started in 2000 and has settled into a Saturday and Sunday event in mid-March at Drexel Park. The festival features dozens of arts & crafts vendors, food vendors, a Kids Zone, classic car show, various attractions, concerts by local bands, etc., all open to the public.

More than 220 arts, entertainment and food vendors were expected at last year's event, said H. Aaron Strickland, the festival executive director.

Some of the vendors have come from afar, Strickland said.

"We've had vendors from Michigan and South Dakota," he said. "We showcase the best of South Georgia, what our area has to offer," he said.

In 2000, Joanne Griner proposed a festival to celebrate Valdosta and its status as the Azalea City.

She founded the Valdosta-Lowndes County Azalea Festival and served as its director for several years.

She remained deeply involved in the festival.

Funding for the Azalea Festival comes from government and businesses, Strickland said.

• **Father/Daughter Valentine Dance**

For more than two decades, First Presbyterian Church has sponsored one of the biggest social events in Lowndes County: the Father-Daughter Dance.

The event was brought to life by Jeff Stewart and his wife, Becky.

The father of two daughters, Jeff Stewart wanted a way to make special lifelong memories with them. He also felt this would be a great opportunity for fathers to not only spend quality time with their daughters, but to show them how a young lady should be treated.

Initially starting in 1997, the first dance only attracted 170 people.

Since then, it has continued to grow exponentially.

The dance has even been featured in Southern Living Magazine.

This year's Father-Daughter Dance was held in February.

• **Mother/Son Luau**

A counterpart to the Father/Daughter Dance. The event, held in March, raises funds for LAY Ministries, a volunteer-based group that benefits local missions.

The event gives mothers an opportunity to bond with their sons in a family-friendly environment. Decked out with Hawaiian-themed decorations, guests



A girl has her face painted at a past Azalea Festival. The 2019 Azalea Festival was March 9, 10, Drexel Park.

FILE PHOTO | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES



Valdosta resident Van McDowell won the visitor's choice award with his 1960s-era replica Batmobile during the 2017 Milltown Murals Motorcade.

FILE PHOTO | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

can enjoy finger food beneath inflatable dolphins or hit the dance floor surrounded by balloons, surf boards and tiki huts.

• **Berrien County Harvest Festival**

Held in September, the annual fair dates back to 2009. Along with arts, crafts and vendors, past festivals have included martial arts demonstrations and evening concerts.

The 2018 festival, was sponsored by the Berrien County Chamber of Commerce and the city of Nashville's Main Street organization.

• **Cotton Blossom Roundup Rodeo**

The 10th Annual Cotton Blossom Roundup Rodeo was earlier this month. The rodeo featured events such as bull-riding, calf roping, bareback riding, team roping, etc.

• **Milltown Murals Motorcade**

Held in April, the annual observation of Lakeland's history — the town was originally named Milltown — spotlights the three dozen-plus murals of Lanier County history adorning many downtown businesses.

The murals were initiated by the efforts of Nell Patten Roque-

more, a Lanier County native and author of two books on Lakeland and Lanier County.

The Milltown Murals Motorcade includes vendors, people dressed in 1920s-era costumes, antique cars and a parade.

The 2019 motorcade is scheduled for April 13.

• **Brooks County Skillet Festival**

Held in October, the festival has been held annually since 2011. Along with arts, crafts and vendors, featured events have included the Cast Iron 5K Run/Walk and the skillet toss. Patrons are invited to toss skillet in a

horseshoe-style competition.

• **Morven Peach Festival**

Held in May, the festival observes Georgia's signature fruit and one of Brooks County's leading crops — the peach.

Entering its 31st year, the festival has, in the past, featured arts, crafts and a parade.

• **Hahira Honey Bee Festival**

Held each October, the festival celebrates Hahira history and showcases what the Lowndes County town has to offer.

It also touts one of the largest parades in South Georgia.



AMANDA USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Edgar Denton and his daughter, 9-year-old Laila Denton, share a moment at the 23rd Annual Father-Daughter Dance held at the James H. Rainwater Conference Center in February.



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Barbara Fordham (played by Patti Cook Robertson) yells at her mother, Violet (Brenda Brunston), to the shock of Mattie and Johnna (Bethanie Bass and Amanda Sanderson) and others in the Theatre Guild Valdosta production of 'August: Osage County' last year. DEAN POLING | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Meet the arts in South Georgia

BY DEAN POLING

dean.poling@gaffnews.com

VALDOSTA – South Georgia has plenty of arts possibilities for people who want to appreciate the arts or participate in them. Here's a look at several organizations available in the region.

ANNETTE HOWELL TURNER CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Where: 527 N. Patterson St.
Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesdays through Thursdays; 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; closed Sundays and Mondays. Most opening receptions, however, are 5-7 p.m. Mondays on designated dates.

Admission: Free.
Offers galleries of art exhibits, concerts, book signings, art classes, a Presenter Series of nationally touring shows and numerous other events.

More information: Call (229) 247-2787 or visit www.turnercenter.org.

DRAMA KIDS THEATRE GUILD

Where: Bemiss Road Baptist Church, 3307 Bemiss Road.

What: Children's theatre organization.

Shows are performed at Valdosta High School Performing Arts Center, 3101 N. Forrest St.

More information: Call Maggie Smith, (229) 269-2871.

LITTLE ACTORS THEATRE

Where: 1108 S. Patterson St.

What: Children's theatre organization.

Shows are performed at Valdosta High School Performing Arts Center, 3101 N. Forrest St., and the LAT headquarters.

More information: Visit www.lit-actors.com.



Dolly (played by Jacque Wheeler) teaches Cornelius and Barnaby (Ethan Ray Parker, Andrew Poston) how to dance while their girlfriends Irene and Minnie (Quinn Tierney Vaira, Larren Woodward) watch in the Peach State Summer Theatre production of 'Hello, Dolly!' last year. DEAN POLING | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

tleactorstheatrevaldosta.com.

PEACH STATE SUMMER THEATRE

Where: Sawyer Theatre, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood.

When: The first show opens in early June, then the subsequent two shows open later in June, all three shows play in rotating repertory through mid-July.

PSST! is part of VSU Theatre & Dance. It is the official musical theatre of Georgia.

More information: Visit www.valdosta.edu/psst.

RKDS FILM FESTIVAL

Where: Mathis City Auditorium, 2300 N. Ashley St.

More information: Visit <https://filmfreeway.com/RkdsFilmFest>

What: A film festival featuring

contest film entries and featured films.

Second Annual RKDS Film Festival will feature chosen films shown at various sites, red carpet event, etc. Celebrity guests expected to be announced in coming months, according to organizers. Run dates: July 11-14.

SOUTH GEORGIA FILM FESTIVAL

Where: Valdosta State University Student Union, 1500 N. Patterson St.

More information: Visit southgeorgiafilm.com.

What: A film festival featuring contest-entry films, etc.

Held the first weekend in March each year.

THEATRE GUILD VALDOSTA

Where: The Dosta Playhouse,

122 N. Ashley St.

More information: Call (229) 24-STAGE or visit www.theatre-guildvaldosta.com.

What: The local theatre organization continues presenting its traditional Main Stage season of shows and its children Gingerbread Players productions.

VALDOSTA CHORAL GUILD

Rehearsals are regularly held 7:30 p.m. Mondays in the weeks prior to concert dates, Messiah Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 500 Baytree Road. There are no auditions. Membership is open to anyone attending rehearsals.

Director: Adrienne Reissiger. Choral Guild presents two series of concerts annually – a Christmastime concert and a spring concert.

VSU ART & DESIGN

Where: Dedo Maranville Fine Arts Gallery, VSU Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood.

Gallery hours: 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays; 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Fridays.

Admission: Free.
Offers several visiting, juried, student and faculty exhibits per year.

More information: Call (229) 333-5835 or visit www.valdosta.edu/art.

VSU MUSIC

Where: Most concerts are at Whitehead Auditorium, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood.

The VSU Music Department presents several student and faculty recitals along with jazz, woodwind and other combos.

Admission: Free.

VSU THEATRE & DANCE

Where: Theatres in the VSU Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood.

VSU Theatre & Dance offers plays, musicals and dance shows per year.

More information: Call (229) 333-5973 or visit www.valdosta.edu/comarts.

VALDOSTA SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Where: Whitehead Auditorium, VSU Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. Exceptions noted.

Offers several concerts per year by the award-winning Valdosta Symphony Orchestra.

More information: Call VSU College of the Arts Outreach at (229) 333-2150 or visit www.valdostasymphony.org.



Howard Hsu, music director at Valdosta Symphony Orchestra, introduces the orchestra to a crowd of kids and parents at the Tunes for Tots event earlier this year. THOMAS LYNN | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Saturday, March 30, 2019

Schnee

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City weighs performing arts center options

BY THOMAS LYNN

tom.lynn@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — The performing arts committee met this week to lay out options for a new center.

It was the second meeting this year to weigh the viability of a new performing arts center for the city; Mathis City Auditorium is the current performing arts center.

During the January meeting, the committee reviewed whether Valdosta is ready for a performing arts center after the public voted down a similar measure in a 2012 SPLOST referendum.

After seven years, the topic of a new performing arts center has come up again because it is time for the city to put together its next round of special purpose local option sales tax projects.

The city is considering whether a new center

'Nothing is official.'

Mark Barber
city manager

should be included on that list to fund it with SPLOST dollars.

City officials are now considering possible partners in bringing a center to Valdosta.

Valdosta High School is at the top of the list of potential collaborators. During the meeting, Richard Hardy, committee chairman and city public works director, showed a video touring the old high school's Performing Arts Center that is located on Forrest Street.

VHS's Performing Arts Center fits a maximum of

See Arts on 5A



THOMAS LYNN | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Dancing with the Stars returns to Valdosta for the seventh year with 16 contestants participating to raise money for Valdosta State University students.

What's up, Doc?

VALDOSTA — Lynn Thomas, first cousin two generations removed from Doc Holliday, met with artist Ethan Abbott in front of the public art mural at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

Thomas, his brother, Bud, and cousin Earle McKey are a few local relatives of Holliday, who is depicted in the artwork created by Abbott.

Holliday, whose father was an early mayor of Valdosta, only lived in Valdosta six years.

However, according to Thomas, when anyone asked Holliday where he was from, he always claimed Valdosta as his "home," over Griffin, the

MORE INFO

For more information about the arts community or public art in Valdosta, visit www.turnercenter.org.

Georgia town where he was actually born.

The mural at the airport, a project of the Public Art Advisory Committee, includes other iconic images of Valdosta's rich history and provides a warm welcome to visitors and to residents returning "home."

For more information about the arts community or public art in Valdosta, visit www.turnercenter.org.



Lynn Thomas, right, first cousin two generations removed from Doc Holliday, poses with artist Ethan Abbott.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

March 26

People's Choice Photo Contest seeks entries

VALDOSTA – The City of Valdosta partners again with the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts for the 11th Annual Valdosta People's Choice Photo Contest.

The local tradition invites people to capture the beauty of Valdosta on camera, city officials said.

The 2019 photo contest sponsors are Coleman Talley and Valdosta Main Street.

This year, photos entered into the contest will be printed on canvas wrap and hung in the center's Tillman Gallery. A \$12 fee for one photo or \$20 fee for two photos will be applied to have entries printed on canvas.

Interested individuals are welcome to submit up to two entries; however, all photographs must be taken within the Lowndes County limits, organizers said.

Entries must be electronically submitted to abecton@valdostacity.com by May 15, and they will be displayed in the Tillman Gallery beginning June 10.

A reception will be held at the arts center June 10 to kick off the people's choice voting, which runs through July 10. For four weeks, the public can view and vote for their favorite photo entries.

Overall winners and honorable mentions for the adult photos and the overall best of show award for youth will be announced at a reception at the arts center, 5-7 p.m. Monday, July 15. Monetary prizes will be awarded to all winners, organizers said.

Marvin Smith, 2018 best of show winner, received the largest number of people's choice votes for his photo, "One In A Million."

The 2019 photo contest will

11TH ANNUAL VALDOSTA PEOPLES CHOICE PHOTO CONTEST

\$700 IN CASH PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED

ENTRY DEADLINE: MAY 15

PHOTO CONTEST INFORMATION:

- Must be 18 or older to enter into adult category
- Entries must be submitted with a signed permission slip from the photographer and the subject's parent/guardian (if under 18) to be eligible for prizes and to be displayed in the gallery.
- Only one entry per person, per contest.
- All photos must be taken in Lowndes County, Georgia.
- All photos must be submitted by the deadline.
- All photos must be submitted in color.
- All photos must be submitted in digital format.

FOR MORE INFO: Audrey Burton, Public Information Officer (229) 239-3448 or abecton@valdostacity.com

continue to feature a category for younger photographers ages 16 and younger. Last year, Amy Vincent won youth best of show for her photo, "Make A Wish."

All photographs will remain on display in the Tillman Gallery through Wednesday, July 24. Winning photos will also become part of a traveling display that can be viewed from August until December in various city locations. All other photos will be returned to the photographer following the contest, organizers said.

No professional skills or special equipment is required to enter.

For more information, call the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, (229) 247-2787 or the city's public information office, (229) 259-3548.

Complete application online. Applications may also be downloaded from <http://www.valdostacity.com/valdosta-peoples-choice-photo-contest>.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Warren wins invitation contest

Ella Warren, a fifth-grade student at Hahira Elementary School, won the 2019 Spring Into Art Invitation Contest at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. Warren's work is featured on the front cover of the Turner Center's Spring Into Art Invitation, and she will be recognized at the Spring Into Art Exhibition opening, 6-9 p.m., April 8. The contest was held earlier in the year and was open to all area elementary school students. Warren, center, is pictured with Hahira art teacher Meredith Nuckols and Turner Center Executive Director Sementha Mathews. For more information or to purchase tickets to Spring Into Art, visit www.turnercenter.org or call (229) 247-2787.



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SUBMITTED PHOTO

A mixed-media suitcase is one of Abigail Sadler's two pieces submitted into the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts Youth Art Month high school competition. It includes the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, Hawaii scenery and Cuban images.

Artistic Abigail

Teen tops Youth Art Month contestants

BY AMANDA M. USHER
amanda.usher@gatlnews.com

VALDOSTA — Family and the country life inspire Abigail Sadler's art.

At 17, the Carrollton resident has won several awards and has received state recognition.

Sadler's repertoire includes her latest honor, winning best in show at the high school competition for the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts Youth Art Month.

Youth Art Month is a yearly event that spotlights the works of students and focuses on art education. Sadler has participated the last two years, but this is her first time receiving an award.

With 107 submissions displayed in the exhibition, the young artist topped students from 12 high schools granting her a \$200 cash prize and a purple ribbon.

Her school, Central High School, had seven pieces from five students submitted into the competition.

"It's awesome," Sadler said. "I'm really happy that I was recognized as best in show."

"Delta" — an owl assemblage

created using mostly pop caps, jar lids and coffee filters — was one of two pieces entered by Sadler.

Her other submission was a suitcase that showcases images of the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, Hawaiian scenery and Cuban imagery.

Hot glue bonds the elements for "Delta."

It is reminiscent of her grandfathers — which includes her "PaPa" who died two years ago.

While scouting items to craft her three-dimensional model, Sadler came across collectibles from both grandfathers that she decided to incorporate into her art.

"Digging through that night, I remember I was looking for specific pieces to kind of pull it all together and I wasn't finding anything," she said.

"But then, we found a box of PaPa's things ... and I was like 'Oh, thanks PaPa,' so that was really good."

Sadler spent some time formulating an idea for her Youth Art Month submission before choosing an owl to keep with her school's Youth Art Month theme of animals.

It took the high school senior

about two or three weeks to complete the work.

Cynthia Landon, Sadler's art teacher, traveled from Carrollton to install the students' artwork.

"Delta" is a superb example of Abigail's ingenuity," Landon said. "She doesn't restrict herself to norms and expectations when manipulating media."

Sadler's win in the Youth Art Month competition is credited to "Delta's" originality and use of materials, said Bill Shenton, Turner Center artistic administrator and curator.

"It was really an interesting way that she put those pieces together," he said.

Landon said the win comes as a validation for Sadler's hard work.

"Abigail is that rare student who is driven to succeed. Her passion and creativity are prevalent in all her work," Landon said.

"She consistently chooses to challenge herself. Abigail's trust in her personal aesthetic was probably the most helpful in the development of 'Delta.'"

Sadler, who describes herself as a cross between a realism artist and a painterly artist, currently does portraits, acrylic paintings and sculptures.

Sculpting is a new interest for Sadler, but her mom said the teen has absorbed herself in painting.

"I think we started when she was 2, and I had an art mat, and I would put it down on the kitchen and give her paints and she would paint," said Amy Sadler, her mom.

"She can make the sparkle



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Abigail Sadler, 17, is the best in show winner for the Youth Art Month high school competition. A reception was recently held at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

in an eye on a portrait of a child look so real that you think they're looking at you. It blows my mind."

Sadler has placed first in the Young Marine Artist search for two consecutive years, first in a Fort Valley Unity and Community Exhibition and has been the first student at Central High to go through the Governor's Arts visual arts program hosted at Berry College, she said.

A life-size model of a ball gown made out of tissue, lace and

book pages will move onto the state level after placing first in the Kiwanis Art and Music Showcase, she said.

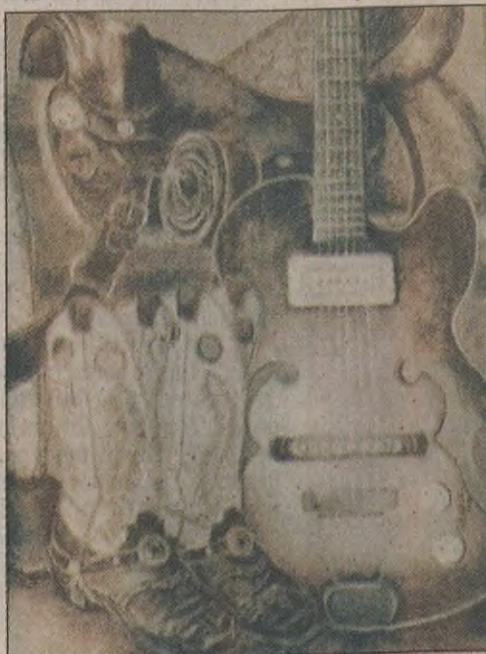
"Art was something that just kind of, I guess, came naturally," Sadler said. "Part of it is just in my blood, but I think part of it is God-given talent that kind of has just evolved over the years."

The Youth Art Month exhibition will be open to the public until Wednesday, March 20. Call (229) 247-2787, or visit turnercen-ter.org, for more information.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Abigail Sadler, 17, is a sculptor and painter. She recently won the Youth Art Month high school competition event held at the Annette Howell Turner



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Part of Abigail Sadler's inspiration for her artwork is her family. 'Cowboy 4 Ever,' a charcoal and chalk piece, was made in honor of her grandfather following his passing in 2016.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

'Sally,' a mixed-media sculpture created by Abigail Sadler, won second place and earned a national honorable mention during a Young Marine Artist search.

sdm
m

Calendar & Events

www.valdostadailytimes.com

Thursday, February 21, 2019

7A

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

SUBMIT EVENTS TO OUR ONLINE CALENDAR AT WWW.VALDOSTADAILYTIMES.COM.

21 THURSDAY

Free Caregivers Classes: 1-2 p.m., My Friend's House, 109 W. Moore St. Sponsored by Valdosta State University's Department of Social Work, this event runs every Thursday from Feb. 21-March 28.

"Intimate Apparel," Lab Theatre, Valdosta State University Fine Arts Building, corner of Oak and Brookwood. VSU Theatre & Dance presents dramatic play by Lynn Nottage, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner. It is scheduled to run 7:30 p.m., Feb. 21-23; 3 p.m., Feb. 24; 7:30 p.m., Feb. 25-26. More information: Call (229) 333-5973 or visit www.valdosta.edu/comarts.

The Painted Canvas Series at The Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N Patterson St., 6-8 p.m. For adults and youth 13 years and up. Class fee of \$30, supplies included. Call the Turner Center for enrollment information at (229) 247-2787.

2 River Station: 5-9 p.m., the Salty Snapper, 1405 Gornito Road. 2 River Station is a female duo that plays covers of popular artists from pop and country.

The Creeksiders Band: 7 p.m.-midnight, Rascals Bar and Grill,

must be 21 or older with valid ID.

2019 Wine and Swine: 6-10 p.m., Valdosta State University Fine Arts Amphitheater Lawn, 1500 N Patterson St. There will be catering from Jessie's Restaurant and 8-Finger Jack Stew and Q. Soular Seven will be there to play live music. Admission includes a BBQ dinner plate, two drink tickets and live music. Join the raffle for a chance to win a basket of VSU Alumni goodies. One raffle ticket is \$5, and three tickets are \$10. Tickets cost \$25 in advance and \$30 at the event.

Game Night at Simply Southern Gifts, LLC, 2182 N Ashley St., 6-9 p.m. There will be three tables for a group of six. Price is \$8 per person. Wine slushies and drinks available. Seating is limited. Tickets available at simplysoutherngifts.com.

Songs From the Road Band with WD Miller: starts at 10 p.m., Ashley Street Station, 607 Baytree Road. This group is made up of veteran musicians who have received top accolades in bluegrass, Americana and jazz.

23 SATURDAY

Brawny, Squanderella, Jacquelyn Jill and Hell 'N Back. Special guests include Mario Vincenzo and Aijuan Dickerson.

Fourth Annual Step Up or Go Home Step Show: 4-9 p.m., Valdosta High School Performing Arts Center, 3101 N Forrest St. V-Town Connection will be hosting the fourth annual Step Up or Go Home Step Show. Teams from near and far will be performing. Tickets will be \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. You can purchase advanced online tickets until Feb. 21.

Heartbeat of a Small Town Tour: 7-10 p.m., Bluewater Saloon, 1905 Baytree Place, Remerton. Come see Travis Denning perform at the Bluewater Saloon.

Sunny Sweeney at Ashley Street Station, 607 Baytree Road, 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. Tickets available at www.freshtix.com.

Justin Spivey Band returns to Rascals Bar and Grill, 4875 US Hwy 41 N, Lake Park. 9 p.m. - 2 a.m.

24 SUNDAY

Embrace Life: 1:30 p.m., the Vision Church Valdosta, 2711 Bemiss Road. This church program

cial with a free pitcher of Natural Light with every order of 16 wings. There are more than six players to a team, and you must register by 6:45 p.m.

26 TUESDAY

Live Trivia Nights: 7-9 p.m., Mellow Mushroom, 1526 Baytree Road. Bring a team and win some Mellow Green. Challenge Entertainment games are always free to play.

Lowndes County Commission Meeting: starts at 5:30 p.m., 327 N Ashley St. The Lowndes County Board of Commissioners meets every second and fourth Tuesday of the month. All residents are encouraged to attend. The meetings are open to the public and allow for public comments.

27 WEDNESDAY

Charcuterie and Wine Wednesday: 5-9 p.m., Friends Grille and Bar, 3338 Country Club Road. Every Wednesday at Friends Grille and Bar is Charcuterie Night. This meat and cheese board is ever-changing, and the bar staff also hand selects four wines every Wednesday

vited to this weekend event. VIP and Festival passes are available now. Day passes will be available during the event. The festival Opening Night Kickoff will be held at Georgia Beer Company at 6 p.m., March 1. Tickets for this event will be \$10 at the brewery, but festival passes can cost up to \$100. For more information, visit SouthGeorgiaFilm.com

Community Yard Sale: 7 a.m.-2 p.m., March 9, American Legion Post 13, 1301 Williams St. Hosted by the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 13, tables and spaces are provided in the parking lot for a \$25 donation. All proceeds will benefit the Unit's support of Veterans and Veteran programs. For more information, contact Unit President Henrietta Traynor at (229) 561-2802.

Dasher Historical Ole Times Day: 10 a.m.-2 p.m., March 16, Dasher Museum, Dasher. There will be weaving, classic cars, corn shelling, cornhole, silent auction and painting. The museum and log cabin will be open. Food is free, but the Society will accept donations.

Guaian Community of Lowndes County presents Ghana's 62nd Independence Day First Annual Traditional Night Celebration: 7-10 p.m., March 16,

Thursday, February 21, 2019

3A

Spring Into Art accepts submissions

BY AMANDA M. USHER

amanda.usher@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Submissions are being accepted to the 32nd Annual Spring Into Art Exhibition.

The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts will host the opening gala 6-9 p.m. Monday, April 8, when winners will be announced.

The deadline to submit artwork is Thursday, March 14; art is to be delivered March 28-30.

Artists of any medium may enter one to two pieces. The center is looking to get 450 pieces from 250 artists. Entries must include titles.

Participants must be at least 18 years old and price their items to sell. Organizers ask that the selling price include a 30 percent commission share for Turner.

There will be two judges awarding placement winners and best in show. Artists will be chosen to have their artwork be featured in the Colson Calendar.

A best-in-show winner will be awarded \$1,000 – a prize that has gone to paintings, woven baskets and a rocking chair in past years, said Bill Shenton, Turner curator and artistic administrator.

To win best in show, an art piece must exhibit craftsmanship, Shenton said.

“There is something to be said by whatever form the art takes,” he said. “It is formed with an exceptional level of talent and skill.”

While craftsmanship and technique are key, Shenton said concept comes secondary.

“It can be a well-executed painting



FILE PHOTO | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Lauren Jenkins talks about her photography submission, 'Delusion,' and its meaning. The piece won first place in the photography category at the 32nd Spring Into Art exhibit. The arts center is taking submissions now for the 2019 exhibit.

of something that's not very interesting – and it won't have people's attention very long – so it has to also be an interesting concept or provoke some kind of emotional response with the viewer to be a good piece,” he said.

He said some pieces are crafted with skill, but they can still be intriguing and catch everyone's attention. Overall, best in show has to stand out in quality and concept.

There is an entry fee of \$40 or \$60 for Spring Into Art. Works must have been crafted in the last two years, ac-

ording to organizers.

Organizers ask that three-dimensional works not exceed 90 pounds and be stable.

Two-dimensional works can't exceed 50 inches in width or 60 inches in height. This includes the frame.

All works will be on display until Wednesday, June 5.

Tickets to the gala are \$45. Call (229) 247-2787, ext. 223; email bshenton@turnercenter.org; or visit turnercenter.org for applications and more information.

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Live, Work, Play

City gets quality of life nod

BY KATELYN UMHOLTZ
katelyn.umholtz@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA — Valdosta was one of nine Georgia cities awarded the distinction of a Live, Work, Play city.

City officials made the announcement during Valdosta Main Street's First Friday event Feb. 1. Mayor John Gayle, City Manager Mark Barber and Valdosta City Council member Sandra Tooley each gave a speech before local band 2South played on a small stretch of McKey Street.

"Our Main Street has been unbelievable in promoting the Live, Work, Play theme," Gayle said. "We're very proud of this award. It will give us statewide recognition, and it will make others aware of Valdosta and its downtown."

The award was given by Georgia Municipal Association and Georgia Trend Magazine for downtown restoration, historic tax credits, creating industry jobs, employment, city collaborations and schools.

Other cities include Avondale Estates, Senoia, Carrollton, Tifton, Toccoa, Canton, Duluth and Lawrenceville.

Cities were divided into three categories — small city, medium city and large



Mayor John Gayle announces Valdosta's newest distinction as a Live, Work, Play city during First Friday last week. KATELYN UMHOLTZ | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

city; Valdosta was in the large city category with Canton, Duluth and Lawrenceville. Except for Valdosta, the other large cities are part of metro Atlanta.

Valdosta was also the largest and southernmost city of the nine that received the Live, Work, Play award.

"This award is also a tes-

tament to our amazing community — all the businesses, organizations and the people such as yourselves that make this a great place to live, work and play," Barber said. "More importantly, we all call it home."

Downtown Valdosta falls into Tooley's district. She said the award reflects downtown's growth — for

example, six new businesses recently opened.

She said her constituents and the Valdosta community can expect more downtown growth in 2019.

"Each and every one of you are going to be part of change," Tooley said. "Valdosta will grow and downtown will grow right along with it."

2/13/19

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Stephen DeAngelis



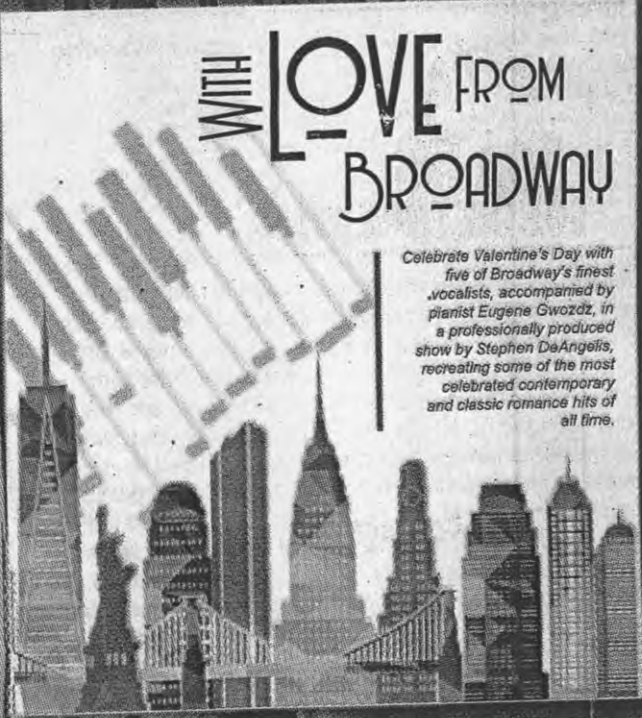
Pianist:
Eugene Gwozdz



Stephen Cuccioli



Rona Figueroa



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Lana Gordon



Jon Peterson



Wade Preston

February 14, 2019
7:30 p.m. at Mathis Auditorium

Individual Show Ticket Price
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Optional pre-show dinner at
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Tickets & Info:
Turner Center for the Arts
527 North Patterson Street,
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SUBMITTED PHOTO

Leadership Lowndes Class of 2019 gathers at Jekyll Island for retreat.

Leadership Lowndes 2019 class assembles

VALDOSTA — The new Leadership Lowndes class is underway as a fresh group of existing and emerging leaders embark on a year of learning and serving.

The class of 2019 kicked off the year with a retreat at the Jekyll Island Resort, members said.

The retreat included team-building exercises and personality tests as well as critical thinking activities involving community issues and solutions.

The class was divided into groups that will assist various non-profits throughout the year. The weekend was just a taste of what the class will experience, members said.

goal is to cultivate knowledgeable leaders who will celebrate our community's accomplishments and work on the issues that need improvement," said Angie Crawford, Leadership Lowndes board president.

Program Days are one of the organization's key components, members said. The days give class members a behind-the-scenes look at the community that most residents don't get to see, they said.

Class members get a first-hand look at local and state government, economic drivers, quality of life components, Moody Air Force Base and education systems.

"Program Days can truly be life changing, even

MORE INFO

To nominate a community leader for the 2020 Leadership Lowndes class, go to www.leadershiplowndes.com.

for class members who are lifelong Valdosta/Lowndes County residents," said Jessica Catlett, Leadership Lowndes board member and program chair. "From debating state legislation in the Capitol to seeing the international footprint of our local industries, these days allow each class member to view our community through fresh eyes."

Below is the list of Program Days for the 2019 class.

- Feb. 13 & 14: State Capitol
- March 21: Defense Day

- April 19: Local Government Day and Courts Day

- May 17: Quality of Life

- Aug. 16: Health & Human Services Day

- Sept. 20: Education Day

- Oct. 18: Economic Development Day

- Nov. 15: Wrap Up/ Graduation

Leadership Lowndes class nominations are always open, members said.

To nominate a community leader for the 2020 Leadership Lowndes class, go to www.leadershiplowndes.com.

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Sponsorship opportunities available. Proceeds benefit the Turner Center for the Arts.

Show makes Broadway memories 'with Love'

BY DEAN POLING
dean.poling@gaffnews.com

VALDOSTA – Broadway producer Stephen DeAngelis has a distinct Valdosta memory etched in his mind.

A teen playing Nala in a Valdosta school production of "The Lion King" met Kissy Simmons who played Nala on Broadway.

"There was a group who were doing the 'Lion King' in high school," DeAngelis said. "We sat in the lobby and just talked and answered their questions."

That was after the 2017 production of "With Love from Broadway" playing as part of the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts Presenter Series.

The Presenter Series brings a new production of "With Love from Broadway" this week to Valdosta.

DeAngelis has gathered new Broadway performers for a new show – all within the same format. The stars sing songs they have performed as characters on Broadway.

They share stories between songs. In the second act, they take audience questions.

Broadway stars are:

Robert Cuccioli: Tony-nominated for his dual title performance in "Jekyll & Hyde," played the Green Goblin in "Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark," etc.

Rona Figueroa: Played Kim in "Miss Saigon," Eponine in "Les Miserables," performed in "Lennon," "Jesus Christ Superstar" and more on Broadway.

Wade Preston: Played the Piano Man in the Billy Joel-inspired "Movin' Out," and will sing and play piano during Valdosta show.

Lana Gordon: Recently co-starred as Velma in Broadway company of "Chicago" and returns to the role after the Valdosta performance, DeAngelis said; has also performed various roles throughout Europe and the Middle East.

Jon Peterson: Recently played the Emcee in national tour of "Cabaret," a role he's also played on Broadway. He's played dozens of roles in numerous venues off-Broadway, on national tour, etc.

DeAngelis describes creating a revue of Broadway stars as similar to creating a fine buffet.

"You want something for everybody," he said, "served up throughout the evening."

SHOWTIME

2/13/19

Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts Presenter Series presents "With Love from Broadway."

When: 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 14.

Where: Mathis City Auditorium, 2300 N. Ashley St.

Ticket: \$50.

More information: Visit the arts center, 527 N. Patterson St., or call (229) 247-2787.

He said in a recent phone interview from New York that he loves creating a different show for each stop. No two shows are alike. He coordinates the shows based on stars' schedules – when they have a break, when they can travel for a one-night show.

DeAngelis crafts a different show, with different artists, for each venue.

"Every show has the energy of an opening night," he said. "Every night has the energy of a closing night."

Performers are backed by pianist Eugene Gwozdz.

"I consider him to be the finest pianist in New York," DeAngelis said. "A brilliant musician and accompanist. He is called the one man virtual orchestra. He plays with the power and dynamics of an orchestra."

"The performers don't have to worry about anything with him accompanying them. They just have to do their jobs and he will make the music work for them."

Gwozdz is also the brother of Donna Farwell, former chorus director of St. John Catholic School. She lives in Valdosta with husband Doug, who is head of the Valdosta State University music department and executive director of the Valdosta Symphony Orchestra.

"We like to play these shows way down stage, close to the audience," DeAngelis said. "I like to think of it as being like Broadway in your living room."

Audiences can see the transformation of each performer as they get into the character from each song from a variety of shows. Shows that some people may

never get a chance to see on Broadway but can get a taste of Broadway in their hometown.

"I like to be able to bring people the real deal in Valdosta," DeAngelis said.



CUCCIOLI



FIGUEROA



PRESTON



GORDON



PETERSON