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# Community Archives - Turner Center for the Arts Scrapbook Collection

CA/007-02-013

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2021

## Turner Center Binder 13 2021

Turner Center for the Arts

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For this and additional works see: [Vtext - Scholarly Texts and Research at Valdosta State University](#)

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# Gelli Printing for Kids!

**Tuesday, July 27, 2021**

**Ages 5-12 | 1-2:30 pm | \$15**

*Instructor/Artist: Harlee Webb*

Want to learn how to create unique art prints? Looking for a fun weekday workshop? Get out of the heat and create some art with us! Students will explore art making using a print process called monotypes. Students will learn how to create ghost prints, magazine transfers, explore textures, use a brayer and roll on acrylic paint to create several prints to take home! All supplies provided.



527 N. Patterson St. | 229.247.2787 | [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org)

# Turner Center presents gallery opening

VALDOSTA – The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts will host a gallery opening reception Monday, Aug. 3, featuring several artists from Valdosta and Tallahassee, Fla.

New exhibits include Jill Bright's collection of oil paintings titled "Bright"; a photography collection from Thomas Phillips titled "Lux et umbra: Monochrome Musings of a Middle-Aged Medic"; Javon Longieliere's photography collection capturing "Hometown Heroes:

A Valdosta, Georgia Story"; and Tallahassee artist Lucrezia Bieler's artwork titled "Cutting Nature," according to a statement from the arts center.

The Turner Center's permanent European porcelain collection is on display in the Howard Gallery.

Center staff is committed to adhering to necessary procedures to maintain a clean and safe experience, which includes several self-sanitizing stations located throughout the galleries, center repre-

sentatives said.

Opening gallery reception attendees are required to wear a mask, or one may be purchased for \$5 from the reception desk. In addition, non-contact temperature checks will be taken at the door.

The free gallery opening reception is scheduled for 5-7 p.m., Aug. 3. All exhibits will remain open to the public through Wednesday, Sept. 16. For more information, call (229) 247-2787 or visit [www.turnercenter.org](http://www.turnercenter.org).

# Corine Myers-Jennings

Dr. Corine Myers-Jennings, age 68, of Valdosta, GA departed this life Monday, July 12, 2021. The Celebration of Life for the late Dr. Corine Myers-Jennings will be Monday, July 19, 2021, 11:00 a.m., from the sanctuary of Crossing Jordan Baptist Church.

Interment at a late date in the Sandy Hill Cemetery in Lake City, SC.

Public viewing, Sunday, July 18, 2021, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Godfrey Funeral Home.

Sympathy may be expressed by signing the online registry at [www.godfreyfuneralhome.net](http://www.godfreyfuneralhome.net).

Professional services provided by Godfrey Funeral Home, LLC.

# Turner Center launches membership drive

**BY HEATHER ROBERTS**

Valdosta State University intern

VALDOSTA— The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts is asking the community to help the arts flourish in Valdosta, Lowndes County and surrounding regions.

July kicks off the 2021-2022 membership year and friends of the Turner Center are encouraged to join.

Becoming a member directly benefits the arts that enrich our lives, communities, and culture, a Turner Center spokesperson said. Through memberships

## MORE INFO

For more information or to become a member, call 229-247-2787 or visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org).

and donations, the Turner Center will continue to serve the community with innovative programs, events, and experiences for people of all ages, the spokesperson wrote in a news release.

Annual memberships renew in July and there are six donation levels to choose from that start at \$100.

Members receive recog-

nition in the Presenter Series program, gift shop discounts, invitation to special membership events, and more. Top donors receive discounts on class enrollment fees and venue rentals along with recognition on the yearlong donor wall.

For more information or to become a member, call 229-247-2787 or visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org).



FILE PHOTO

Debi Davis, center, was an artist and a teacher of art as seen in this 2018 file photo from the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. Family and friends held a memorial service for her this past weekend.

# Remembering Debi

## Family, friends honor late artist

BY AMANDA M. USHER

amanda.usher@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA – Mike Firesmith was planning to marry his girlfriend, the late Debi Davis. Time was not on their side.

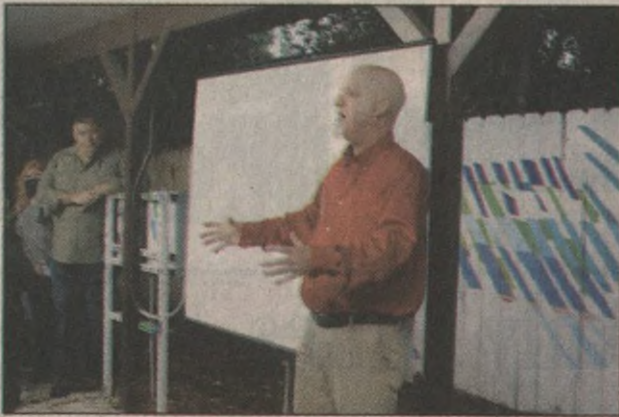
The two were going to get married once the pandemic settled but they never received the chance.

Deborah “Debi” Sue Davis – an art educator in the Valdosta community – died April 2 of melanoma, skin cancer.

The 68-year-old was first diagnosed with and treated for cancer eight years ago, Firesmith said. On Jan. 7, the family learned it returned as a tumor on her brain that kept getting larger, he said.

With Firesmith by her side, she died at home while under hospice care.

“I can’t explain to you the feeling that you’re re-



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Mike Firesmith, boyfriend to the late Debi Davis, speaks at her memorial Saturday held at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. He is wearing the red shirt that Davis gave to him as a Christmas gift.

lieved that someone is no longer suffering,” he said.

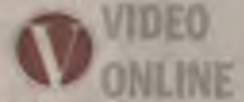
Davis was cremated, and there are plans to spread her ashes in places that meant the most to her, Firesmith said.

Family members and friends gathered at the Annette Howell Turner

Center for the Arts Saturday, April 17, to honor Davis. They shared stories, lasting memories of their time with her.

### Her Life

She was born Deborah Mayer in St. Louis, Mo., and relocated to Valdosta



valdostadailytimes.com; see 'REMEMBERING DEBI'

as a teenager, said her only child, Scott Davis. She was born Feb. 27, 1953, and was the youngest of five children, the family said.

She became a lover of art in her early days, admiring the ability art afforded a person to be able to express themselves.

She attended school in Lowndes County and earned a master's of art degree from Valdosta State University, according to her obituary published in The Valdosta Daily Times.

She married the late Jeffery Davis, according to the obituary.

See Debi, page 6A

# DEBI: Debi Davis was an artist and a teacher of art

Davis will represent art educators throughout the state but, given she may well be the association's first president from South Georgia, she sees her role as an opportunity for the area."

After teaching at Lowndes, she became the arts education administrator for the Turner Center. She worked at Turner from 2016-20 before she landed a job at Valdosta State University as adjunct professor where she taught aspiring art teachers.

She had only been at the university a few months before she died.

"Debi was a ray of sunshine to all people," said Semantha Mathews, executive director of the Turner Center. "She was a part-time employee at the Turner Center, but she was a full-time artist, always engaged in the arts through her ability to create beautiful works and to share them with others."

She met her significant other - Firesmith - at the arts center.

In December 2018, he was visiting the center, picking up items for a writer's group in which he was a member. He noticed an abstract painting in Davis' office and decided to speak to her about it.

"The conversation wound up lasting about two and a half hours," he said. "We talked about art, we talked about what she did up there, we talked about a lot of things and I walked out the building with her phone number."

Upon first interacting with her, he thought her to be extremely professional and knowledgeable about her craft.

At her home, near a river in the county, Firesmith said she had a personal art museum.

"She had something from her students," he said. "She had something from people she's known. She was just immersed in the art world."

The couple attended art events together and had plans to travel to museums.

Firesmith's favorite moment with Davis took place while hiking and coming across a blocked trail.

There was a fence, and Firesmith said rather than turning around as other people would, a 67-year-old Davis opted to climb the fence. Naturally, he said he went behind her and they continued onto the trail on the other side of the fence.

He said that moment spoke to who Davis was as a person.

"She was not fenced in,"

Firesmith said. "She was willing to go above boundaries, and that's how we'll remember her is somebody that wasn't boxed in."

He said she never succumbed to fear or despair.

Scott Davis said the greatest lesson his mother taught him was to display strength, to not give up and to persevere.

As for what Kocik will miss the most about Debi Davis, she said it would be the advice she'd give, the weekly text messages exchanged and her laugh.

"Her heart was her best quality," Kocik said. "She was just so kind."

## Goodbye, Debi

Though Davis' memorial was held on a cool and rainy evening, the atmosphere in the Turner Center's Art Park was warm with love.

A photo presentation of her scrolled across the screen, displaying memories she made with others.

Eyes teared up as former co-workers, former students and others exchanged stories about their late friend. Most of the speeches focused on Davis' life as an educator.

Wearing a bright red shirt that Davis gave him, Firesmith started the

round of memories. He said they had previously held a conversation about art when Debi expressed that people aren't photographed in red much because they aren't bold enough.

Well, for Christmas, she gave him the shirt as a reminder to be bold, he said.

Scott Davis told the small crowd that his mother "was a teacher to everybody for as long as I can remember."

Donnte Troy was taught by Davis at Lowndes Middle School and VSU. She told everyone how Davis helped prepare her to teach a lesson.

"Everybody needs a Debi," she said, "and I pray that if you are a student-teacher and you're here and you met her, I pray that somewhere in your life, you get the chance to have a Debi because that Debi helped me to grow past what I thought I needed."

Cathy Malone worked with Davis at Lowndes Middle.

She called Davis an encourager.

"She meant so much to all of us at Lowndes Middle, and to her students, and I'm just very thankful for the encouragement she gave me and the inspira-

tion she was for me," she said.

Cheryl Oliver, who was the Turner Center's executive director at the time of Davis' employment, said she was a treasure.

Family members urge the community to remember Davis as a teacher. They said she loved her students dearly.

Mathews said it's her passion that her students will remember.

They'll keep in mind her desire for everyone to have access to art's "powerful expression of life," Mathews said.

"But her infectious laughter and smile are what people will remember most about her good-spirited and positive nature that made people feel welcomed and accepted," she said.

Samantha Davis, Scott's wife, said her mother-in-law was always joyful and was happy to teach and learn.

"She never considered herself the caliber of artist that she was," Samantha said. "She loved introducing other people to it (art). She was so proud of the students that were able to grow up and express themselves in the medium that she taught them. I think that made her more proud than the artwork she paint-

ed with her own hands."

Firesmith said her students were her passion and are her legacy.

She loved her students and was loved by her students.

Firesmith said teaching art "was her life's dream."

"She knew how to reach people," he said. "She knew how to figure out a person's strength and weakness in their art. She was extremely kind. ... She was dedicated to turning out good teachers. Her dedication to her craft was amazing. It was a wonderful thing to behold."

If Kelly could speak to her aunt one more time, she said she'd tell Davis thank you.

"I don't think I told her that enough," she said. "She taught me a lot. I think I relied on her more than I think I thought I did, and now that she's gone, I kind of realize (that)."

Scott said he would tell his mom that he loves her while Samantha said she'd tell Debi how much she misses her.

As for Firesmith, he urges people who wish to get married or to do the things they want to not wait.

"You can run out of time at any moment," he said.



FILE PHOTO: THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

A best in show prize is usually awarded to the top artist at Spring Into Art hosted by the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. Tom Davis III secured best in show for his cherry wood rocking chair in a past Spring Into Art exhibit.

# Spring Into Art

## S.Ga.'s largest exhibit returns



FILE PHOTO: THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Mary VanLandingham wins best in show for her oil piece titled 'The Last Day' at the 32nd Annual Spring Into Art exhibition. The 34th annual show returns 6-9 p.m. Monday, April 12, at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St.

VALDOSTA — 500 pieces of art. 200-plus artists.

34 years.

Three-hour gala.

Spring Into Art is back.

Last year, the live, opening gala was canceled, going virtual, due to the pandemic.

Not this year.

Spring Into Art kicks off with the traditional opening gala, scheduled 6-9 p.m. Monday, April 12, Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, 527 N. Patterson St. Gala tickets are \$45 each.

Monday evening, the best in show winner will be awarded \$1,000. First-place winners in each

category will receive \$500, center staff say. Works that will be included in the 2022 Colson Calendar will also be announced.

Following the gala, the exhibit will be on display, free to the public, April 13 through June 9, in all galleries of the arts center.

Spring Into Art remains the largest, most inclusive, and democratic of art exhibits in South Georgia.

Though Spring Into Art is a juried show, it is unlike many other juried shows anywhere. Most exhibits accept many entries and then pare

See Art, page 8A



**AUGUST 7, 2021 | 6:30 PM**

Rainwater Conference Center | Valdosta, GA

ANNETTE EKOWIS  
**TURNER**  
CENTER  
FOR THE  
ARTS



# AMERICAN SOUNDTRACK VOL. VIII

*Join us in a celebration of the best  
American radio hits of all time, performed  
LIVE, backed by the Ed Barr Orchestra.*

**\$75**/ticket

LIMITED SEATING

includes reserved seating,  
heavy hors d'oeuvre buffet  
and full cash bar

PRESENTING SPONSOR

**HANOVER**  
**ADVISORS**

**TICKETS ON SALE NOW!**

Call 229.247.2787, visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org), or scan the code

All proceeds benefit the Turner Center for the Arts



# Art park music series continues

**BY HEATHER ROBERTS**

Turner Center for the Arts

· VALDOSTA – The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts hosts Winds of Change, a classic rock cover band, for a patriotic Music in the Art Park summer concert, 7-9 p.m. Friday, July 9, in the Art Park, 605 N. Patterson St.

The live concert is free to the public, center representatives said.

Community members are invited to bring their blankets and lawn chairs to this family-friendly and pet-friendly event to relax in the park and enjoy the music, they said.

Ella's Top Corral and the Pour House Mobile will be the food and beverage vendors on site.

The Music in the Art Park concerts take place 7-9 p.m., on the second Friday of each month, March through November, feature local favorite musicians and are always free to the public.

Patrons who need special assistance may contact the center to make arrangements. For more information, call (229) 247-2787 or visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org).

*Heather Roberts is the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts' Valdosta State University intern.*



# Photography & Photo Editing

**Tuesday, July 20, 2021**

**Ages 18+ | 6:30-8:30 pm | \$100/full 4-week course**

DSLR Camera Needed | Scholarships available

*Instructor/Photographer: Eric Vinson  
of Dreaming Wild Photography*

A comprehensive course that teaches the basics of photography and photo-editing, including learning how to operate the camera and it's settings to capture better photos, understanding natural and artificial light, shot composition and posing subjects. Visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org) for full course description.



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527 N. Patterson St. | 229.247.2787 | [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org)



# Music in the Art Park

FRIDAY, APRIL 9, 2021 | 7-9 p.m.

Turner Center Art Park

FEATURING

SPONSORED BY

**WRONG  
TURN**  
band

**MALA  
VALLOTTON**

Bring your lawn chair or blanket and enjoy great music! The Shrimp Box and The Pour House will be on site! This event is pet friendly.

229.247.2787 | [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org)  
605 N. Patterson Street, Valdosta 31601

# Writing contest winners named

VALDOSTA – The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts and its Young Writers League hosted the first “The Art of Writing” contest sponsored by the Georgia Council for the Arts, Guardian Bank and the Greater Valdosta United Way for middle and high school students in Valdosta, Lowndes County and the surrounding areas.

Sixty unique pieces of writing based on the inaugural “Living United” theme were received for the contest, arts center representatives said in a statement.

A special recognition ceremony for these young writers will be held 4:30 p.m. Monday, Aug. 2, at the arts center, immediately prior to the regularly scheduled gallery opening reception. Both events are free and open to the public.

“This relatively new platform for young inspiring authors across our area is gaining momentum,” said Sementha Mathews, center executive director. “It is exciting to witness the commitment of these young people to their craft of writing and to the development of a valuable skill that will greatly impact their future. We look forward to honoring their achievements at the Aug. 2 reception.”

Contest winners will receive cash prizes and a copy of the anthology which includes the works of the winners and all hon-

orable mentions. Winners and honorable mentions of “The Art of Writing” 2021 are as follows:

## Middle School Nonfiction

– Julia Soshnik, Valwood School, seventh grade, first place

– Bailey Vice, Northeast Middle School, seventh grade, second place

### Poetry

– Maddock Kuo, Valdosta Middle School, seventh grade, first place

– Julia Soshnik, Valdosta Middle School, seventh grade, second place

– Karmen Denson, Valdosta Middle School, seventh grade, third place

## High School Nonfiction

– Ian Repsher, Valdosta High School, 12th grade, first place

– Gretchen Stubbs, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, second place

– Huntley Herring, Valdosta High School, 11th grade, third place

– Ethan Grace, Valdosta High School, ninth grade, honorable mention

### Poetry

– Katie Goodwin, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, first place

– Catriona Moore, Valwood School, 10th grade, second place

## MORE INFO

The deadline for the 2022 Art of Writing contest is Jan. 15, 2022, and will feature another unique theme to engage young people in important civic topics, center representatives said. For more information, call (229) 247-2787 or visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org).

– Alina Lassiter, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, third place

– Ethan Grace, Valdosta High School, ninth grade, honorable mention

– Rufus Freeman, Valdosta High School, 12th grade, honorable mention

– Niara Walker-Potts, Valdosta High School, 11th grade, honorable mention

## Fiction

– Kendall Haden, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, first place

– Leslie Monroy, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, second place

– Vivian Thomas, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, third place

– Catherine Moody, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, honorable mention

– Ethan Grace, Valdosta High School, ninth grade — honorable mention

– Sarah Byram, Valdosta High School, 10th grade, Honorable Mention

Poetry submissions were judged by Dr. Cheryl Carvajal, author and instructor of humanities at Wiregrass Georgia Technical College and Roberta George, author and founder of Snake Na-

tion Press. Prose submissions were judged by Miriam Jackson, instructor of English at Wiregrass Georgia Technical College, and Jordan Weber, distance education specialist at Wiregrass Georgia Technical College.

“We are so pleased with both the number of entrants and the quality of the entries,” Carvajal said. “We can only hope that next year’s contest includes such a creative and meaningful collection from middle and high school writers in all our local schools.”

YoWL, led by Carvajal, allows students to express themselves through written word, improve their writing skills and pursue authorship with contests such as “The Art of Writing.” Classes take place via the Discord app and are open to writers ages 10-18. The Discord app and YoWL classes are free.

The deadline for the 2022 Art of Writing contest is Jan. 15, 2022, and will feature another unique theme to engage young people in important civic topics, center representatives said. For more information, call (229) 247-2787 or visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org).



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Rob Evans is a featured performer in 'American Soundtrack.'

## 'American Soundtrack' features Evans

VALDOSTA – The Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts will host local talent with worldwide sound in a celebration of the best American radio hits of all time at "American Soundtrack Vol. VIII."

The event is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 7, at the James H. Rainwater Conference Center, sponsored by Hanover Advisors, center representatives said in a statement.

"Backed by the Ed Barr Orchestra, the lineup of live performances and local talent is sure to encourage audience members to their feet," cen-

ter representatives said.

Among an impressive list of local talent, "American Soundtrack" will feature Rob Evans.

Evans has performed with "American Soundtrack" since its first performance in 2012. He has played guitar acoustically with a band for 20 years but finds that the big band experience "American Soundtrack" provides is unmatched.

"In this environment, you'll see some folks that have dedicated their lives to learn an instrument," Evans said. He describes the event as an

"incredible chance to see great musicianship up close."

Evans said he values that "American Soundtrack" allows attendees to reminisce and enjoy an evening full of songs that may have been part of the soundtrack of their lives.

Tickets for "American Soundtrack Vol. VIII" are \$75 and include reserved seating, a heavy hors d'oeuvre buffet and a full cash bar. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org), call (229) 247-2787, or visit the offices at 527 N. Patterson St.

# News & Weather

Tuesday, August 3, 2021

[www.valdostadailytimes.com](http://www.valdostadailytimes.com)



SUBMITTED PHOTO

**Bruce Smith, LVAC president, Mary Ann Drumheller, new CAG member, Jane Burgsteiner, CAG president, Tangela Kimber, new LVAC member, Cathy Johnson, new CAG member, Damian Grey, new LVAC member, Diane Stewart, new CAG member, Adam Setser, new LVAC member, Semantha Mathews, Turner Center executive director, Jeani Synyard, returning LVAC member, and Evelyn Langdale, new LVAC member. (Not pictured in photo is returning LVAC member Robert Goddard.)**

## Arts center welcomes board members

VALDOSTA – The Lowndes-Valdosta Arts Commission and the Center for the Arts Guild welcomed new board members at their new board member orientation held at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the

Arts.

The new board members “play a vital role in helping LVAC and the Turner Center accomplish its strategic goals and increase the engagement in and appreciation for the

arts across our region,” arts center representatives said in a statement.

For more information about the LVAC, CAG or other volunteer opportunities at the Turner Center, call (229) 247-2787.

# Abstract Artist

## Stephen Lahr prepares for upcoming show

BY AMANDA M. USHER

amanda.usher@gafnews.com

VALDOSTA – Shut-in during quarantine last year, Dr. Stephen Lahr chose to utilize his time creatively.

The abstract mixed-media artist put color on a canvas and went to work, making a number of artworks that will be seen in an upcoming show at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

He calls the collection “COVID series,” though not all of the artwork was completed during quarantine.

“The work in this show was my working period from the late 1960s to this year. It is a retrospective to some degree – about 50 of the works were done over a long span of time and the other pieces have been done in the last two years,” Lahr said.

Actually, the new pieces were done during the COVID (pandemic), but they didn’t influence any of the pieces; it just gave me time to produce these pieces.”

to be featured in the



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Artist Stephen Lahr will feature 65 pieces of artwork in the Price-Campbell and Mittiga galleries in the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts. The show opens 5-7 p.m. Monday, June 14.

Price-Campbell and Mittiga galleries at the arts center; the exhibit will showcase Lahr’s watercolors and acrylic paintings, mixed-media collages, assemblages and photo-

graphs.

He is skilled in oil painting, as well.

Lahr’s journey into the world began at age 4, when his aunt gave him an easel and paints.

“All through grade school in both Illinois and Nebraska, I was always known as the artist of the class,” he said. “In fact, I got a purple ribbon from the Illinois State Fair for a

drawing of a Navajo Indian roping a calf. So, I would say I’ve been an artist for going on 74 years.”

Born in Lincoln, Neb., Lahr relocated to Decatur, Ill., where he lived for two

### Showcase Details

Featured Artists:  
Jaime Llewellyn-Liang and Leslie Wallace-Coon (“Two Perspectives in Clay;” Josette’s Gallery), City of Valdosta People’s Choice Photography Contest (Jerry Tillman Gallery), Rosemary S. Ferguson (“The Spirit of Watercolor;” Boyette Gallery) and J. Stephen Lahr (“Artworks from 1965-2021: Price-Campbell and Mittiga galleries)

Opening Reception:  
5-7 p.m. Monday, June 14; free admission

Gallery Offerings:  
June 14 through July 28

More information:  
(229) 247-2787, turnercen-ter.org

years before returning to Nebraska.

After studying art for two years at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, he ventured to Northern Colorado State University to study wildlife art.

Lahr said he earned three degrees from the





AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Abstract expressionism inspires artwork done by Stephen Lahr. He'll have 65 pieces of artwork in the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts from June 14 through July 28.



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

In the 1990s, Lahr was inspired by painter Richard Diebenkorn to paint cigar box lids. A painting he did from this inspiration was recently featured in the Spring Into Art exhibit hosted by the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

# For the People



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

The City of Valdosta and the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts opened the 13th Annual People's Choice Photo Contest during a reception held Monday at the arts center. People can vote for their favorites.

## Turner Center, city open new art exhibits

BY AMANDA M. USHER

amanda.usher@gafnews.com

### MORE INFO

Gallery hours: 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. Friday and Saturday; closed Sunday and Monday. For more information: [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org), (229) 247-2787 and 527 N. Patterson St.

VALDOSTA — In a partnership between the city and the local arts center, the 13th Annual People's Choice Photo Contest kicked off Monday.

The yearly kickoff occurred simultaneously with an opening reception for the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts' newest exhibits.

More than 70 photos were submitted for the contest, which are seen in the center's Jerry Tillman gallery, and they were taken by both professional and amateur photographers.

Coleman Talley and Downtown Valdosta Main Street sponsor the contest.

Contest categories are arts and architecture, daily life, adult people's choice and youth people's choice.

"They're incredible; make you proud of where you live," Valdosta Mayor

Scott James Matheson said of the submissions. "I can't believe people can actually see things the way they see them and get them onto paper. ... I'm very proud. It's going to be tough to judge. I wish everybody well."

The public has through July 14 to vote for their favorites and winners will be announced 5 p.m., July 19.

First-place winners in each category will receive \$200, with the youth first-place winner being



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Ashlyn Johnson, City of Valdosta public information officer, speaks about the People's Choice Photo Contest during an opening reception Monday at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

See Contest, page 7A

# CONTEST: The 13th Annual People's Choice Photo Contest kicked off Monday with an opening reception at the Turner Center for the Arts

awarded \$100, according to a statement from the city. Honorable mentions will be recognized in all categories.

Monday evening, the Turner Center presented three new exhibits featuring four artists.

One of the artists is Rosemary S. Ferguson of Tallahassee, Fla. She has 33 pieces featured in her collection named "The Spirit of Watercolor" in the Sallie and Harmon Boyette gallery.

Ferguson is a painter who works from photographs. She is an avid

participant of the Turner Center's Spring Into Art exhibit.

"I love Valdosta," she said. "I wish we had a gallery of this kind. ... I love this gallery. I'd pick it up and move it to Tallahassee if I could."

Leslie Wallace-Coon and Jaime Llewellyn Liang combined their work to open "Two Perspectives in Clay" in Josette's Gallery while J. Stephen Lahr opened "Artworks from 1965-2021" in Price-Campbell Foundation and Margaret Mittiga galleries.

All artwork will be on display through July 28 at the arts center.

The People Choice Photo Contest submissions will be part of a traveling display that will be seen in various communities from August until December, according to a statement from the city.

Gallery hours: 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday and Saturday; closed Sunday and Monday.

More information: [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org), (229) 247-2787 and 527 N. Patterson St.



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

**Bill Shenton, curator at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts, presents artists Leslie Wallace-Coon and Jaime Llewellyn Liang during an opening reception Monday, which included Wallace-Coon and Liang's exhibit, 'Two Perspectives in Clay.'**



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

**J. Stephen Lahr, abstract expressionist, does mixed-media collages on cigar box lids. The lids are part of his display hanging at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.**



AMANDA M. USHER | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

**Rosemary Ferguson, watercolor painter, has 33 pieces hanging in her 'The Spirit of Watercolor' exhibit at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.**



FILE PHOTO | THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

Turner Art Center curator Bill Shenton prepares the galleries for a past Spring Into Art exhibit. Annually, Shenton is a key organizer in the show that usually draws in hundreds of people to the center and rakes in artwork worth thousands of dollars. Spring Into Art has been an annual exhibit for more than 30 years.

**ART:** Visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org).

down those entries through the judging process to include half or typically less of the entries for exhibit.

As long as the artists keep to the rules and enter their entries by the deadline, everything entered in a Spring Into Art show is given exhibit space at the Annette Howell Turner Center for the Arts.

Another number for Spring Into Art includes the hundreds expected to attend. While the reception returns, visitors will be required to wear masks and observe other safety protocols, according to the arts center website.

More details, visit [turnercenter.org](http://turnercenter.org), or call (229) 247-2787.

## VSU: Funding will be granted through Feb. 28, 2022

methamphetamine use.

Chaumba said Lowndes County is not currently eligible for the grant because of its urban area status but hopes that, upon the grant expiring, the work will continue and expand to include everyone in VSU's 41-county service region.

The selected counties were chosen after statistics were collected for regional counties and found those were the highest risk areas looking at factors such as number of lives lost in the counties and emergency room visits for overdoses.

She also noted a factor that stood out was the Centers for Disease Control's number of prescriptions available per 100 people in counties across the United States with each county within the project coming in alarmingly high.

The issue also expands beyond adults, Chaumba said, with not only children

being exposed in utero, but children losing attention from parents who are users and possibly stumbling into experimentation themselves.

Funding will be granted through Feb. 28, 2022.

The plan is to work with community stakeholders to determine strengths, where there could be gaps in services, identify areas to prioritize and come up with a strategic action plan, Chaumba said. Stakeholders include Tiffany Henderson of Union Behavioral Health in Waycross and Cherysh Green-Caldwell of the Tifton Judicial Accountability Court.

Both agreed the research will benefit their respective agencies.

"When we were asked to partner, we were definitely willing to commit to that. There's a lot of complexity to the problem and there's

strength in collaboration. It enables us to work on common goals together and identify the needs and where we can do better as stakeholders," Henderson said.

Within their respective agencies, both women work on an accountability core and see firsthand how clients could benefit.

"We provide direct services toward the individual suffering with opioid addiction; we have first-hand experience with the barriers they suffer," Green-Caldwell said. "I welcome the opportunity to let the consortium and our stakeholders know exactly what the issues our clients are suffering from are so we know what areas we need to work on as a community."

Other participating organizations include Family Connection/Communities in Schools of Berrien County, Turning Point,

Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine South Georgia, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Department of Rural Studies, Tift Regional Hospital, Tift County Commission on Children and Youth, NAMI Moultrie, Never Lost, VSU Center for South Georgia Regional Impact, VSU Social Work Program and VSU Faculty.

Those interested in joining the consortium can contact [dhollim@valdosta.edu](mailto:dhollim@valdosta.edu) or [jchaumba@valdosta.edu](mailto:jchaumba@valdosta.edu).

As for community involvement, finding a proper prescription disposal location can make a difference. The Valdosta Police Department has a prescription drop-off box in its lobby and several can be found throughout Tifton including the CVS located on Eighth Street and the Tift County Sheriff's Department.