



Arts in Hand

SUMMER 2019

Clay Day

Local Potter to Challenge World Record at Clay Day Event in Northwest Wisconsin

by Harriet Rice



Richard Meaux practicing for Clay Day.

Wisconsin's Northwest Heritage Passage, a Spooner, Wisconsin-based non-profit organization that does business as the Arts in Hand gallery, is staging *Clay Day – Potters in the Park*, a community event on Saturday, August 17, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in downtown Spooner.

"Our goal for this event is to celebrate and promote local artists," said Sandy Mackie, a member of the event planning committee. She added, "It's also part of our vision as an arts advocate to educate and connect the public with the creative economy here in northwest Wisconsin." The event consists of demonstrations, "make and take" activities and a potter's challenge.

Booths will be set up in Centennial Park at the corner of Walnut and River Streets in downtown Spooner. Twenty area artists will demonstrate how they work with clay by sculpting, decorating, throwing and pinching pots.

As many as 10 potters will teach on site. Each one-hour session will start with a 15-20-minute presentation followed by 30-40 minutes during which the professional potter will work with visitors invited to create a pottery piece of their own to take home. There will be a special children's area for youngsters to learn and create a piece of pottery.

The highlight of the day is the challenge by local potter Richard Meaux, who will attempt to break the Guinness Book of World Records for the most pots thrown in an hour. The current record of 193 pots is held by Jim Calhoun of Phoenix, Arizona, set in March 2018. Meaux is already practicing in his Spooner studio. "What I figured is, I have to [throw] a pot every 15 seconds," he said.

Meaux teaches art at a Northwest Wisconsin high school. He and his artist wife, Mary Kay, like to share their art with people. "We were thinking of a way to draw attention to a hand-craft. I was going to do [the world record challenge] on my own last year, but I decided it was a way bigger project than I realized," said Meaux, who's been throwing pots for 45 years.

Taking on a world record with the Guinness organization is quite a process. Meaux explained, "They want you to make sure it's done out in public, that it's video recorded – it's going to take a lot of people to be involved. When the Clay Day idea came up, I volunteered to pitch in and help. The planning committee wanted something as a culmination of Clay Day to make it more interesting, so I said 'Why don't we do the World Record?'"

Meaux will use an electric wheel. Each piece of clay he uses must weigh 21 ounces. Volunteers will prepare and stack the clay in advance, lining them up on boards next to Meaux's wheel. Judges will watch to ensure each pot is complete and meets Guinness size criteria.

"We are really excited to bring this event to our community," said Mackie. The program is funded by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board, Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Admission to Clay Day events is free and open to the public. For additional details, visit artsinhand.com, email artsinhand@centurytel.net, or call 715.635.9303.

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President's Message: Earl Duckett



Welcome to another summer in Spooner, Wisconsin. Summer is a time we can relax, have fun in the sun and just finally get warm after a long, hard winter. It is also the busy season for the Arts in Hand Gallery which has seen significant growth over this time last year. Congratulations to Ruth, Sandy, Jean, LeAnn and other gallery committee members for a great year in 2018 and the start of another one in 2019.

The current Gallery Committee has done a great job of getting the gallery to where it is today, and now it is time to begin planning for the future. I believe that to be successful in the long run, the gallery has to be managed by artists for artists. With this in mind the Arts in Hand Board has approved the establishment of the new Gallery Management Committee. The members of this committee will be primarily artists with the responsibility of managing all phases of gallery operations. I have asked Karen Turner, Sandy Mackie, Gail Threinen, David Haessig, Jannifer Long, Liz Alberg and Mike Threinen to be the initial members of this committee with Mike Threinen as Committee Chair and David Haessig as Vice Committee Chair.

The committee's role will be to manage the gallery for growth. If there is excess revenue generated by the gallery, some of those funds will be used to make improvements where needed. Any additional excess revenue will be used to help fund the mission of the Wisconsin Northwest Heritage Passage Organization.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of those artists and volunteers for their hard work in bringing the gallery to this point. Ruth Skeie, Sandy Mackie, LeAnn Johnson, Jean Speaker, and Carmella Crandell are among those volunteers that worked many hours to get this gallery started and make it successful. I know there are others that worked hard as well and my thanks to all of you.

Please add your support to the Gallery Management Committee as they begin this new journey..

She's Back!

Carmella Crandell returns to board

Carmella Crandell has returned to the board of directors for Arts In Hand, formerly known as Wisconsin's Heritage Passage as of June, 2019. Having served on the board for several years, part of that time as President, she had resigned last year when she and her husband both met some health challenges and it became apparent he would be receiving a stem cell transplant at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. We are happy to report they are both doing very well now. She commented, "I am glad to be back on the art advocacy scene in our part of the state to support our local artists and encourage the value of art in a healthy lifestyle in the Northwoods of Wisconsin." Carmella is also back to weaving, spinning and other fiber arts at Shear Luck Farm near Shell Lake.

Arts in Hand Gallery News:

Digital Marketing

Especially during the summer and fall months (our peak selling season), the majority of our visitors to the Arts in Hand gallery are first time, non-local residents. And today, many, if not most people coming to a new area rely on the internet to find things to do before heading out for the day. Arts in Hand has begun stepping up our presence on “digital marketing” sites to insure people more easily find us when searching for things to do in Spooner.

We are now listed on Yelp

<https://www.yelp.com/biz/arts-in-hand-gallery-spooner?osq=Things+To+Do>

And, on TripAdvisor

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g60293-d15757543-Reviews-Arts_In_Hand_Gallery-Spooner_Wisconsin.html

Our goal now is to get reviews of the gallery on both these sites. With positive reviews, we will increase our ranking in the Top 10 Things to Do in Spooner.

We have also made some changes with the gallery Facebook page recently. If you have not checked this out, please do. And if you have not [Liked](#) the Arts in Hand Spooner WI Facebook site, please make sure you do, and, make sure you [Invite](#) your Friends. This is a key marketing tool for the Gallery, with more changes coming.

Great Start to the year!

The gallery is off to a great start for 2019, with sales growth of 223% in the first six months, and the month of June alone, exceeding the first six months of last year! Thanks to all the volunteers for making this possible, and to all the artists for all the great art sold through the gallery! Outstanding!

Many factors are driving sales.

- We are now open every Sunday starting in May
- The selection of art and price points is better aligned with the Arts in Hand customers
- Downtown Spooner is busier with new shops and restaurants like Round Man Brewing Co. More people in Spooner, means more customers for us.

The Gallery Board of Directors is committed to support the volunteers and the artists to continue to grow Arts In Hand Gallery and make it one of the premier spaces for artists in Northwest Wisconsin. Your comments and suggestions are always welcomed.

New Gallery Management Committee Formed

The Arts in Hand Board of Directors, has formed a new Gallery Management Committee. Per the definition of this new Committee, it is charged with issues impacting the "daily operation" of the Gallery. These issues include:

- Selection of artists
 - Current artist evaluation process and actions
 - New artist search (based on Gallery need) and jury process
- Gallery (physical) layout and design1
 - And process for ongoing maintenance of layout
 - Recommendations to the board for future investments
- Operations
 - Square operations, Inventory Systems, etc
- Volunteer processes
- Communications with artists regarding the Gallery

The following people have agreed to serve on this new committee:

Karen Turner, Sandy Mackie, Gail Threinen, Jannifer Long, Liz Alberg

-David Haessig – Vice Chair

-Mike Threinen – Chair

The Committee will meet monthly and report to the AIH Board of Directors. Your input is welcomed.

Strategic Planning for the Future for Arts in Hand

by David H Haessig

At a meeting earlier this year, the Wisconsin Northwest Heritage Passage board of directors agreed to participate in a strategic planning process for the organization.

The planning session was facilitated by Ariga Grigoryan, Community Resource Development Specialist from Sawyer County.

We gathered ideas from all board members and it was decided that a “revitalization” of the board was necessary before we could proceed with a strategic plan.

Our first session was a full day on June 28th. After a very productive day discussing history and expectations we decided to hold another session to continue the process.

This is an exciting time for the organization. In the future we will be including members and other stakeholders to help determine our path forward.

Rural Arts Forum group shares ideas, offers resources, addresses challenges

Northern Lakes Center for the Arts in Amery was the setting for this year's Rural Arts Forum. More than 30 attendees represented communities from Rhinelander to Hudson, Wis. and Stacy, Minn. The Forum was hosted by LaMoine and Mary Ellen McLaughlin, who, as the Center's directors, are celebrating 30 years of success in offering the community a wide variety of arts from a gallery to theater, classes, and chamber music.

Guest speakers included George Tzougros, executive director of the Madison-based Wisconsin Arts Board, who recently received the prestigious Michael Newton Award at the Americans for the Arts National Convention; Anne Katz, executive director of Arts Wisconsin, the state's leading arts advocacy agency.

Katz presented statistics from a U.S. Department of Commerce and National Endowment for the Arts study: "Wisconsin's creative industries have a \$9.7 billion annual impact on the state's economy," she said, continuing, "That creative workforce is larger than the state's beer, biotech and paper making sectors combined." and adding, "This research proves that creativity is a resource needed by every Wisconsin business and community in the 21st century. It is clear that Wisconsin's creative sector is a positive forces for change."

Several members of the Arts in Hand board attended the Forum.



Earl Duckett, preident of AIH, confers with Brittany Beyer at Forum.



Arts in Hand Mission:

- *celebrate and showcase northwest Wisconsin’s heritage and artisan products that are handmade and homegrown
- *educate the public about the contribution of the creative community to the quality of life in northwest Wisconsin
- *promote and foster growth in northwest Wisconsin’s creative industry