

<i>All Warwick residents interested in the arts are invited to volunteer</i>	
Warwick Arts Council	Betsy Alkins, 200 Brush Valley Road
Warwick Arts Council	Patricia Lemon, 700 Old Winchester Road
Warwick Arts Council	Cornelia Montgomery, 1049 Orange Road
Warwick Arts Council	Mari Rovang, Shepardson Road
Warwick Arts Council	Janice Starmer, 77 White Road
Warwick Arts Council	Miryam Williamson, 162 Old Winchester Road
Warwick Arts Council	Tom Wyatt, 555 Northfield Road
Warwick Arts Council	Nicol Wander, 344 Old Winchester Road
Wooden Fender	Matt Hickler (Royalston)
Wooden Fender	Michael Humphries, 77 White Road
Wooden Fender	Roy Mogel (Orange)
Wooden Fender	Alan Morgan, Winchester Road

A Brief History of the Warwick Arts Council

Artists and people with artistic skills have, no doubt, always lived in Warwick expressing themselves through homes, gardens, quilts, paintings, and the music of their time. The history of the existing Warwick Arts Council began in the early 1980s when Karen Ansett and Michael Humphries began to discuss and formalize the concept of an Arts Council and its possible mission in Warwick. The group planned to bring local artists together for shows, performances and educational opportunities. In the fall of 1982 the Warwick Arts Council was formally established and held its first “annual” Arts and Crafts show at the Warwick Town Hall. In 1985, with the aid of erstwhile Town Attorney Les Black, the arts Council finally obtained non-profit status, enabling it to solicit donations and gifts for its programs. With the high expectation of acquiring a grand piano for concerts at the town hall, fund-raising events began in earnest, culminating in 1986 with the Fonebone Intergalactic Labor Day. The WAC had, over several years, raised over \$5000 and at Town Meeting, townspeople voted to support the Arts Council's dream by paying the “other half” of the ticket for a Yamaha grand piano for the town hall. The piano was purchased in 1987, and the first concert was performed that year by the Olefsky Trio in a crowded Town Hall.

Over the past few decades, significant contributions in time and energy by many people along with an array of fundraisers including auctions, raffles and open donations at concerts have kept the Warwick Arts Council active and vibrant, sponsoring performances, classes, individual art-education scholarships, and equipment purchases. Some of the more notable fundraisers were a raffle for a quilt, handmade by Jan Norris, Goods and Services Auctions at the town hall, led by our local auctioneer and head fundraiser, Michael Humphries, and rental income from the Warwick Arts Council’s tent. Sound and musical support from Rick and Tonia King has been instrumental. Tom Wyatt crafted a series of grants which awarded the WAC with money for significant upgrades in equipment and the Town Hall acoustics. A number of individuals have applied for and won Massachusetts Cultural Council grants for performances and projects with children and adults. The continued support from the many people not mentioned here has created a community full of art, music, performance, literature, and fun.

In recent years long term chairperson Janice Starmer has facilitated Arts Council work with “Wooden Fender,” a spin-off group founded in memory of Jeffrey Wallace to focus specifically on enhancing the enjoyment of musical events in Warwick. A new mixing board and sound equipment enhance the performances of the broad range of musical groups

blues, jazz, rock and roll, country, classical, ethnic and world music) now coming to Warwick.

Often working in conjunction with other groups in town, The Warwick Arts Council continues to foster the work of artistically inclined citizens of Warwick and surrounding towns.

—submitted by Michael Humphries