

Who is Page Valley Arts Council (PVAC)?

History- On February 8, 2010 the Luray Town Council voted to officially declare a major portion of downtown Luray an “Arts and Cultural District.” The Planning Commission and Town Council unanimously agreed to adopt a larger overlay zone of Luray Downtown Initiative’s (LDI) existing Main Street District/Historic District. Incorporating the art and cultural elements under the LDI umbrella benefits Page County economically by using established resources. The cultural district designation capitalizes on the existing cultural events and opportunities while preparing the community for enhanced marketing efforts and celebration of all cultures that make our community unique. It exposes assets that create a new market of potential business in the community, as well as sustain an already established environment. To prepare information and suggestions to Town Council, the organization of an Art Council was established using a small group of interested volunteers. At the time the role of the Council was yet to be determined, it was to provide leadership in mobilizing cooperation and involvement from various groups and citizens in order to grow the local art economy, thereby creating jobs and increasing income levels. Their efforts focus on capitalizing and enhancing existing arts & cultural initiatives by: facilitating collaborative marketing and service efforts; securing funding to support economic development within the creative economy; and attracting business and tourism. The council was then named the Page Valley Arts Council, representing interests in all of Page County and meeting the last Wednesday of the month since June 2011 at Luray’s Visitor Center/Train Depot.

PVAC Mission Statement- To foster a regional creative economy by identifying, organizing and promoting our visual and performing arts, cultural activities and other creative endeavors.

PVAC Vision- Art, as it relates to the five senses.

Projects

- Luray Art Trail: organized existing murals and art pieces into three walkable ‘loops’. This information is currently located on the LDI website. Funds have been raised print postcard designed by local artists which include trail maps and QRcode.
- Serves on LDI’s Promotion and Economic Restructuring Committees
- Facilitated “Art as Business” Seminar with Small Business Development Center/Harrisonburg at LFCC, January 2012
- Building and maintenance of community (Page County) “Artist” database
- The “Art Town Hall Meeting” in March 2012. Many participants suggested some type of “center” for the area and mentioned Grove Hill at that time.
- Cash Sponsored Poster Contest, 2012 Earth Day Event. Planned for 2013.
- “JMU Band Camp” Senior Project with LHS Graduate Hali Good-Brown, June 2012. Speaking with students interested in similar projects for 2013.
- PVAC website “live” this month

2012 Events include pumpkin painting contest, 13th & 20th of October, in conjunction with LDI’s downtown Trick-or-Treat event on 27th October, and an “Art A-Live” Day at the Warehouse Art Gallery, 20th October. Funds raised funds by several ART functions and projects include “Sip & Paint”, “Healing Art”, and “Nangria” at *Love Your Downtown*, and have several other creative ideas for future funding.

Partners- Luray Downtown Initiative (LDI), Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Valley Artist Guild, Blue Ridge Youth Theater, Warehouse Art Gallery & Expressions Studio, S&N Music and Art, The Pottery Lady, Shenandoah Moon with Page County Made, EarthDay on the Greenway, People Inc., and Page County Grown.

PVAC Vision for ART in Page County

Economic Impacts

Business Development- In recent years, significant domestic and international forces have resulted in the closing of businesses that were the mainstay of prosperity in towns and counties like Page County. In many cases, the economies of these locations were not diversified, which created a high level of dependence on a relatively small number of firms and/or industries. Those firms had significant impact on the infrastructure, leadership, and direction of these communities—impacting culture, training, education, and economic prosperity. Artistic talent and business skills need simultaneous development in order for the artisan businesses to grow and prosper. A niche-based economic development program for the arts & culture sector in Luray/Page County will focus on cultivating collaborative leadership, product identification and local branding.

- Identify a entrepreneurial practices/leadership model within the arts/cultural niche
- Mobilize the collaborative forces of local and regional organizations to design and initiate an infrastructure focused on serving a diversified, small business economy
- Involve both identified niche community members and organizations in the development and implementation process

“Art as Business” in Rural Communities- Luray and Page County is thriving with a wide range of arts and cultural activities. The community includes critical arts-related stakeholders such as Warehouse Art Gallery, Page Valley Arts Council, Performing Arts of Luray, Page County Grown and Trackside Theater. In spite of the local enthusiasm for the arts and training available in business skills, the industry remains fragmented and does not generate significant economic activity. A recent market analysis report initiated by People Inc. and LDI, indicates that the arts & culture sector faces obstacles in “market readiness”—both in levels of artistry as well as business skills such as planning, marketing and promotion, financing, etc. PVAC could stimulate collaboration between artists/artisans, key intermediary institutions and the community. Activities will emphasize heritage arts & culture including culinary arts, local food, agri-traditions, music, visual and performing arts, etc. Newly established networks and partnerships will take advantage of a range of resources to advance accomplishments in artistic and entrepreneurial skills, creating a strategically significant scale of economic activity that will be able to overcome the obstacles currently faced by microenterprise artists/artisans and entrepreneurs in this rural area.

Educational Impacts- Today’s youth is Page County’s future and enhanced art education will help them prepare for college and careers. A comprehensive arts education program also engages students in a process that helps them develop the self-esteem, self-discipline, cooperation, and self-motivation necessary for success in life. Arts education activities outside of regular school hours and the presence of school-community partnerships will contribute to Page County’s future. Grove Hill could be “the place” to create mentorships from established artists, a “flop house” environment for the creative oddball, it could also be a vocational/career school focusing on the arts and “art as business” or general development.

Currently, Page County has one of the highest unemployment rates in the state with household incomes below national averages. Local youth will benefit our community economically with enhanced arts education. See reference study below.

Youth Have Better Academic Outcomes, Higher Career Goals, and Are More Civically Engaged -March 30, 2012 National Endowment for the Arts

Washington, DC-- At-risk students who have access to the arts in or out of school also tend to have better academic results, better workforce opportunities, and more civic engagement, according to a new NEA report, *The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies*. The study reports these and other positive outcomes associated with high levels of arts exposure for youth of low socioeconomic status.

The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth study uses four separate longitudinal studies (three from the U.S. Department of Education) to track children, teenagers, and young adults who had high or low levels of arts engagement in or out of school. Those activities included coursework in music, dance, theater, or the visual arts; out-of-school arts lessons; or membership, participation, and leadership in arts organizations and activities, such as band or theater. The study focuses on the potential effects of arts engagement on youth from the lowest quarter of socioeconomic status. Although most of the arts-related benefits in this report applied only to these at-risk youth, some findings also suggest benefits for youth from advantaged backgrounds. "Arts education doesn't take place in isolation," said NEA Chairman Rocco Landesman. "It has to take place as part of an overall school and education reform strategy. This report shows that arts education has strong links with other positive educational outcomes."

Among the key findings:

Better academic outcomes- Teenagers and young adults of low socioeconomic (SES) status who have a history of in-depth arts involvement ("high arts") show better academic outcomes than low-SES youth with less arts involvement ("low arts"). They earn better grades and have higher rates of college enrollment and attainment.

- Low-SES students who had arts-rich experiences in high school were ten percent more likely to complete a high school calculus course than low-SES students with low arts exposure (33 percent versus 23 percent).
- High-arts, low-SES students in the eighth grade were more likely to have planned to earn a bachelor's degree (74 percent) than were all students (71 percent) or low-arts, low-SES students (43 percent).
- High-arts, low-SES students were 15 percent more likely to enroll in a highly or moderately selective four-year college than low-arts, low-SES students (41 percent versus 26 percent).
- Students with access to the arts in high school were three times more likely than students who lacked those experiences to earn a bachelor's degree (17 percent versus five percent).
- When it comes to participating in extracurricular activities in high school, high-arts, low-SES students are much more likely also to take part in intramural and interscholastic sports, as well as academic honor societies, and school yearbook or newspaper -- often at nearly twice or three times the rate of low-arts, low-SES students.

Higher career goals -- There is a marked difference between the career aspirations of young adults with and without arts backgrounds. High-arts, low-SES college students had the highest rates of choosing a major that aligns with a professional career, such as accounting, education, nursing, or social sciences (30 percent), compared to low-arts, low-SES students (14 percent) and the overall SES sample (22 percent). Half of all low-SES adults with arts-rich backgrounds expected to work in a professional career (such as law, medicine, education, or management), compared to only 21 percent of low-arts, low-SES young adults.

More civically engaged - Young adults who had intensive arts experiences in high school are more likely to show civic-minded behavior than young adults who did not, with comparatively high levels of volunteering, voting, and engagement with local or school politics. In many cases, this difference appears in both low-and high-SES groups.

- High-arts, low-SES eighth graders were more likely to read a newspaper at least once a week (73 percent) compared to low-arts, low-SES students (44 percent) and the overall SES sample (66 percent).
- High-arts, low-SES young adults reported higher volunteer rates (47 percent) than the overall sample and low-arts, low-SES young adults (43 and 26 percent respectively).
- High-arts, low-SES young adults voted in the 2004 national election at a rate of 45 percent, compared to 31 percent of low-arts, low-SES young adults.

PVAC is a volunteer “teamed” organization with needs that include: structured committees with identified plans and goals; involved members to discuss, plan and initiate programs and activities that will progress art focused discussion and business efforts in the community.

Future funding opportunities:

Virginia Arts

www.arts.virginia.gov/grants/index.html

<http://www.arts.virginia.gov/forms/Tourism/13Tourism.pdf>

www.vaforarts.org/Default.aspx?pageId=162736

virginia.grantwatch.com/cat/2/arts+and+culture+grants.html

Arts & Culture grants, economic development, community enrichment

National Arts/Ag

NEA- www.nea.gov/grants/apply/index.html

grants.gov- <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?mode=VIEW&flag2006=false&oppld=51353>

USDA- http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/had-cf_grants.html

Arts Education/Enrichment

Contact: Nancy Brady, PVAC lead organizer, it GET involved.
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Page Valley Arts Council Organizational Chart

