



Fairfield Arts Council

# ArtVoice

Summer 2004 Vol.5 No.3



Fairfield Theatre  
Company  
launches first play  
in new home



Artist of the Year  
2004:  
Charles Dodsley  
Walker




FAC Hosts  
Business  
Breakfast



Volunteer  
Spotlight



Heritage Writing  
Program  
Fairfield Senior  
Center

 Fairfield Theatre Company presents  
The Worth Street Theater Production of

## THE MOONLIGHT ROOM

June 23 - July 11, 2004      FTC Studio Theatre

## ArtVoice

### Vol.5 No:3

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## A Note

Congratulations to the Fairfield Theatre Company! On June 23rd the company opens its second season at its new home – 70 Sanford Street in downtown Fairfield.

Miles Marek, Stephen Stout, Jeff Provost and a dedicated FTC Board of Directors have worked tirelessly over the past four years to turn the dream of a live theatre in Fairfield into a reality. Now it's our turn to support their efforts by coming out in full force as an appreciative community. Let's make sure every production is sold out and that the message is clear—Our community wants the arts in the heart of Fairfield.

The Fairfield Arts Council is proud to have supported the company's efforts along the way. Our organization hosted early brainstorming sessions on launching the theatre, and helped identify and then advocated for the use of the town-owned property at 70 Sanford Street with the town government. FAC also helped launch the theatre's first season, held at the Quick Center in 2001, when we honored FTC board member Keir Dullea at our 2001 Artist of the Year event. Partial funds from the event helped get the company off the ground.

This new theatre season, however, is only the beginning! FTC plans to build a second, larger theatre at the site, and the two theatre venues will be available for a range of arts programming. In 2005, when FAC and the Chamber of Commerce also move into the space (now temporarily occupied by the displaced downtown public library), the location will become a more visible street-level arts and business information center for Fairfield. And FAC hopes to play a role in developing additional space at the center and keep the entire facility hopping with creative activity.

Members of the Fairfield Theatre Company have made the impossible become possible by bringing their professional expertise and years of experience home to roost in their own community. We thank them for keeping the focus in their own backyard, and we salute them for putting their faith in all of us.

They believed that if they built a theatre, people would come. Let's join together and prove them right!

—*Ryan Odinak, Executive Director*

## FAC Strengthens Ties with Local Businesses

More than 25 businesses were represented at FAC's first Business Breakfast on May 11th at Rooster's in downtown Fairfield. Rooster's generously provided the space and the coffee and pastries, as FAC executive director Ryan Odinak provided an overview of FAC activities and its mission. Sue Gold, chairman of FAC's membership committee, also spoke about the impact of the arts on community and economic vitality, and invited the attendees to become FAC business members. Some of the promotional benefits include listing in FAC publications and on our new website. The meeting concluded with a business card raffle of an original photograph by renowned travel photographer Claudia Schechter. Thank you to Claudia, as well as to Lori Petchers and Dorothy Straub for their help in organizing the breakfast. ■

## Volunteer Focus - Sarah Smith Lubarsky

Planning an event as complicated as FAC's Artist of the Year celebration requires lots of time and the ability to manage a number of intricate details. For a nonprofit group like FAC, it also means finding someone generous enough to do the work voluntarily. In every respect, Sarah Lubarsky, who has served FAC for three years and is now vice president, is truly the perfect person for the job.

"I'm an event planner and I used to be a caterer, so it was a natural fit," says Lubarsky, who majored in theatre in high school and used to work as a stage manager. Using many of the same theatre skills, Lubarsky says you have to coordinate a group of activities, create an overall program that flows and works as a whole, keep it to a certain length and, not to be forgotten, prepare impressive refreshments.

Lubarsky, a Fairfield resident who lives with her husband David and two daughters, is accustomed to giving her all to volunteer activities. In addition to her impressive work for FAC, she is a past president of both the Stratfield School PTA and the PTA Council of Fairfield. ■



Sarah Smith Lubarsky

## Fairfield Theatre Company: Break a Leg!!

At 2 a.m. on a Saturday night in New York City, two teenagers sit in the waiting room of a hospital's emergency room. A harrowing 24 hours follows, where everything is at stake.

That's the premise of "The Moonlight Room," by Tristine Skyler, a Worth Street Theater Company production that recently finished its off-Broadway run with several rave reviews. It's also the play that is launching the Fairfield Theatre Company's new season in its new Studio Theatre, in its new downtown home, 70 Sanford Street.

"We're thrilled to finally be opening the first phase of our construction plans with the opening of our Studio Theatre," said Jeff Provost, FTC's Managing Director.

"Through the help of the Fairfield Arts Council, First Selectman Ken Flatto, and many FTC supporters, we're finally realizing our dreams of bringing live theatre to Fairfield Center."

Previews of "The Moonlight Room" began on Wednesday, June 23, with the production running from Saturday, June 26 through Sunday, July 11.

One reviewer said, "Rather than treating your teens to an outing with some glitzy show, take them to see 'The Moonlight Room' and listen to what they have to say about it afterward."

"We were looking for an opening play that would remind our audiences who we are and what kind of theatre we like to share," Provost explained. "This is a story that speaks to both generations and specif-



FTC's Producing Director Miles Marek, Artistic Director Stephen Stout, and Managing Director Jeff Provost with a model of the new theatre space in downtown Fairfield. (Photo by Larry Merz).

ically deals with communication, or, in the case of some of these characters, lack of communication."

The FTC, founded in 2000, is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is "to bring the best of New York's Off and Off-Off Broadway directly to Fairfield." During its inaugural 2001 season, the company presented three highly regarded plays on campus at Fairfield University.

FTC has raised more than \$450,000 to support its 2004 season, from Fairfield Motor Cars, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network - The Bender Group, and Shoff Darby Companies, Inc.

Tickets for "The Moonlight Room," which contains mature themes, are available at the FTC box office from noon to 5 p.m., now through July 10. Tickets, and FTC memberships, can also be purchased online at [www.fairfieldtheatre.org](http://www.fairfieldtheatre.org) or by calling 203-259-1036. ■

## FAC Awarded Grant to Launch Arts Calendar

As part of the kick-off of the new Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism, the state gave organizations the opportunity to apply for "Fast-Track" grants that encourage partnerships between arts organizations and other commission divisions. FAC received \$1,000 to design and produce an arts calendar that will be distributed with our grant partner, the Fairfield Chamber of Commerce. This three-month arts planner will help promote the arts in Fairfield and bring audiences and patrons into town. ■

## Not-For-Profit Arts Organization Members

Art/Place  
Connecticut Audubon Birdcraft Museum  
Connecticut Dance School  
Connectivity  
Fairfield County Arts Association  
Fairfield County Children's Choir  
Fairfield Theatre Company  
Great Bridgeport Youth Symphony Orchestra  
Meetinghouse Civic Orchestra  
Music for Youth, Inc.  
Regina A. Quick Center for the Arts  
Suzuki Music School of Westport  
Wednesday Afternoon Musical Club

## Business Members

Boston Billiard Club  
Christine C. Brady Design  
Barbara Detullio, ASID  
ELM Landscapes, LLC  
Gayle Erickson Graphic Design  
Family Holistic Health Care  
Fairfield Gallery & Frame, Ltd.  
Fairfield Interiors  
E. & S. Field/ The Field Studio  
Geiger's Landscape Architects  
Dr. George Goldfarb & Dr. M. Ranno  
Great Beginnings Montessori School  
Donald L. Heymann & Co.  
Kasson Jewelers  
Martha King Voice Studio  
Cherril Kolesik Decorative Painting  
Ruth Ridgeway Design  
John Schreck, Artist  
The Westport Inn  
Writer's Workshop of Fairfield  
Zera Musicland

## FAC Needs Volunteers For:

Database entry  
Newsletter Distribution  
Mailings  
Odd-jobs  
General office help  
**203-319-1419**

**The Fairfield Arts Council is proud to announce that Charles Dodsley Walker, organist and choirmaster of Trinity Church, Southport, and conductor of the Trinity Chorale has been named FAC Artist of the Year 2004. Mark your calendar for this spectacular event on October 9th, and look out for more information about Mr. Walker and the event in our fall newsletter.**

# Heritage Writing Program Preserving Memories

When Valerie Woodworth moved to Fairfield in 1942, there were two houses on her street and two rowboats in the non-existent marina down the road. Woodworth has witnessed first-hand the dramatic changes that have transformed Cambridge Street and South Benson Marina – along with the town of Fairfield – over the years.

Woodworth is now part of a group of senior citizens trying to preserve those memories for future generations through The Heritage Project, an outreach program of the Fairfield Arts Council created to maintain the individual stories of Fairfield residents.

The process began in February, when Carol Dannhauser, a journalist, invited seniors at the Fairfield Senior Center to participate in two roundtable discussions. "We all learned so much about the evolution of the town of Fairfield and about each other," Dannhauser said. "It was wonderful to be a part of such dynamic sessions."

Now she's working one-on-one with nine of those seniors to establish individual oral histories.

"My first reaction after she left was that it brought back a lot of memories I had forgotten," Woodworth said of her interview with Dannhauser. So many, in fact, that Dannhauser had to make another appointment to interview Woodworth's husband, John, another Heritage Project participant.

Using interview transcripts and memorabilia, the participants will be able to create their own memory books. To help, scrapbook artist Lisa Schmitt will conduct two free book-making classes for the seniors. ■



John and Valerie Woodworth discuss the Heritage Writing Program with journalist Carol Dannhauser.

## Update: A Commission By Any Other Name...

Last month we reported that the Connecticut Commission on the Arts had merged with several other state agencies to form something called, for short, CT CATCH-F. You probably guessed that most everyone guessed the name a bit cumbersome, especially when it was spelled out as the Connecticut Commission on Art, Tourism, Culture, History and Film. So the legislature went back to the drawing board and came up with a new, shorter name – the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism. The same agencies will still be part of the commission, and each will function as a different division. Jennifer Aniskovich, the commission's Executive Director, is in charge of administration, advocacy, and strategic initiatives. An-Ming Truxes, director of the Arts Division, is in charge of the Wallace START initiative, agency planning and programming, and agency partnerships. ■

Support the arts in Fairfield  
Become a member

For more information please call (203) 319-1419



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