

ADA upgrades underway at New Hope Arts

Work proceeds thanks to a state grant, Ralph Fey Architects

With thanks in part to a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania — Department of Community and Economic Development, New Hope Arts is undergoing a multi-phase construction plan to enhance gallery access for patrons, and expand the programming schedule, making New Hope Arts a more inclusive contributor to the art world in the visual, performing, and literary arts.

An elevator is being installed to permit easy access to all three levels of the gallery, as well as a new ADA access ramp, a compliant bathroom, compliant entry door and canopy, and a new interior stair to the gallery space.

New Hope Arts Gallery is currently closed to the public for an estimated four-month period to transform the interior space and improve accessibility. During this time, New Hope Arts programming and exhibition opportunities continue in



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

An elevator is being installed to permit easy access to all three levels of the New Hope Arts gallery, with the help from a grant from the state's Department of Community and Economic Development.

Other area venues in collaboration with other nonprofit organizations, Ralph Fey Architects has taken

this project from concept to reality. In addition to the upcoming renovations, Ralph Fey and his team have provided pro bono services for the past 16 years to maintain the quality and comfort of New Hope Arts.

The elevator grant, sponsored by state Sen. Steve Santarsiero, initiated the building improvement campaign. "The current renovation is

moving forward, thanks to the generous support of donors, sponsors, and members as New Hope Arts starts its third decade of service to the arts and artists of our community," said Carol Cruickshanks, New Hope Arts executive director. "We are excited to expand access and our service and looking forward to the significant improvement of our facility."

"Peter and the Starcatcher" can be caught at Music Mountain Theatre

Lambertville — Peter and the Starcatcher provides a humorous and fantastical backstory for the beloved character of Peter Pan and his arch-nemesis, Captain Hook. The production is an imaginative play based on the New York Times bestselling novel by Dave Barry and Ridley Pearson.

Music Mountain's production opens Friday and runs on weekends through March 12. Show times are 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays.

Peter and the Starcatcher features a nameless boy and a precocious Starcatcher-in-training

named Molly, who is on a mission to thwart the evil and greedy pirate Black Stache. Peter and the Starcatcher playfully explores the Neverland you never knew. "This is a celebration of youth and of the power of theater to inspire children and adults alike."

Casting for the MMT production includes Riley Frankhouser as Boy/Peter, Suzanne LaGreca as Molly, Louis Palena as Black Stache, Jordan Brennan as Smee, along with Alex Klein, Cyrus Carter, John Fischer, Michael Gearty, David McCloughan Jr., Tyler Brennan, Jeff LaGreca, Roger Madding, Mike Prkrlir and

Colby Langweiler.

Tickets are \$32 for adults and \$30 for students/seniors/military and can be purchased by visiting musicmountaintheatre.org, in person at the box office, or by calling 609-397-3337.

In addition to the mainstage productions, performances for young audiences are offered throughout the year. Disney's Frozen Jr. is running through March 11. Young Audience tickets are just \$10 and show times are Saturdays at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Music Mountain Theatre is located at 1483 Route 179 in Lambertville.

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Cindy Woodall: Meandering with My Mutt

The embrace of nature

This sunny, balmy mid-February day holds the promise of spring but I don't trust Mother Nature on this one. She has a way of lulling us into a false sense of warm weather security and then surprising us with wintry wrath, and after all spring is yet a month away.

Noah and I are at Voorhees State Park in Hunterdon County, N.J., exploring the trails here being a first time experience for us. In 1929 the original park lands were donated by Foster Voorhees a former New Jersey governor, his 325 acres later enlarged to 640 through succeeding land acquisitions. Members of the Civilian Conservation Corps occupied the area during the Great Depression and can be credited with building roads and parking lots, constructing shelters and picnic sites, planting trees, and establishing trails, creating the beautiful park folks enjoy today.

As we arrive and drive past the park office and down the park road, we appear to be the sole visitors at this point in the morn-

ing with the luxury of having the park all to ourselves. Given my feeble sense of direction, I have prudently printed up a park map that displays a number of color-coded trails. We embark upon the Brookside Trail, which runs along Willoughby Brook, its waters churning and tumbling over moss-covered rocks. Along the path a bench sits atop an incline with a view to the waters below. It invites me to sit, relax, take in the landscape, and enjoy the scenery, an invitation I willingly accept. Stay a while, it says, and I do.

Despite the monochromatic, winter landscape there are traces of greenery if one seeks them out. Interspersed throughout the forest are spruce trees, frequently scraggly, appearing to suffer from the domineering canopy of the towering hardwoods. Moss is everywhere and beneath our feet are patches of grass and tufts of wild onion grass. Wild onion grass has an unmistakable onion aroma and flavor and is a cousin of our garden grown chives, on-

ions and garlic. Like the domestic versions, all parts are edible, although perhaps not quite as palatable.

Our path follows along the brook, zigzagging back and forth over it via wooden bridges. Noah descends the bank to partake of the icy water and, having quenched his thirst, leaps across in super dog fashion to avoid getting his tootsies wet. If possible, he has gotten even leaner and lankier, not yet fully grown into his rangy legs. He's a confident, handsome fellow, his sleek, black coat gleaming in the sunshine.

At the top of Brookside Trail we turn left, crossing over a bridge and onto Hollow Trail, which brings us through the woods, skirts small fields and dives back into the forest, meandering along the brook. Eventually, it loops uphill and back onto our original trail where we savor our final moments outdoors before heading home. Whatever the season, the natural world embraces and nurtures, uplifting the soul and nourishing the spirit.

The Great Amphibian Migration is happening

It only happens once a year. All across the northeastern United States, all manner of local amphibians—including spotted salamanders, wood frogs and spring peepers—make the long and arduous journey from their winter burrows to their ancestral breeding pools.

Unfortunately, the trek can be quite treacherous, especially when it involves crossing paths with a

car, and that's exactly the situation locally, where a major amphibian migration occurs every year at Perry Auger Road.

The good news is that you can help these valuable and vulnerable critters to safely cross the road during their night-time journey. Join local herpetologist Kyle Loucks for an online presentation about these beautiful creatures and the ways to make their journey safe-

er, all in preparation for a future event, participants will gather at Perry Auger when the nighttime migration begins.

To attend the free, online Zoom presentation, at 7 p.m. Friday, Feb. 24, contact Nancy Bousum at nbousum@gmail.com or 215-378-0410.

Visit tinicumconservancy.org for information about the Tinicum Conservancy and all its ongoing programs, or call 610-294-1077.

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