



April 2020

**Hello friends!**

I hope this newsletter finds you safe and healthy as you shelter in place. All of us are inundated with news, reflections, advice, and observations about the coronavirus. I'll simply acknowledge the surreal quality of our world today and the obvious disruption to our daily lives. Of course we at RAAC are also affected but we are determined to use our creative energy to maintain our sense of community.

As we reported last month, RAAC events will remain cancelled for the foreseeable future. And while we recognize that no one knows when the shutdown will end, we remain hopeful that community life will resume in the not-too-distant future.

While we wait out this uncertain period of risk mitigation, your RAAC Board is still at work and adjusting with Zoom meetings while finding artful ways for all of us to stay connected. Toward that end, we invite you to:

- **Watch** an exclusively Rappahannock video about our annual [Fall Art Tour](#) to keep us dreaming about an art-filled fall. See our update below.
- **Share** photos of your time in pseudo-isolation using RAAC's new Instagram site where you can show us what you're doing, what you're seeing, what's happening in your neck of the county. See below for details.
- **Read** below about eight of our 2019 Mitchell Arts Fund recipients and how they're leveraging their grants in creative ways. More awardees will be featured in upcoming issues.
- **Know** that the Mitchell Arts Fund committee is evaluating proposals from local artists and organizations for 2020 grants to be announced in June.
- **Stay tuned** for special emails in the weeks ahead with local eye candy and arts-related links that will make you smile.
- **Volunteers needed** - for all you creative types, Rapp Sr Center is looking for some volunteers. They're trying to think of special things to include in their weekly goody bags to families. So far they've included word search puzzles, cards/letters/stamps, and other things like that. If you have some ideas, please email Darcy Canton at [isingpraises@hotmail.com](mailto:isingpraises@hotmail.com).

Finally, we're midway through RAAC's annual membership-fundraising drive. In spite of this challenging time, we are grateful and encouraged by the great support from neighbors and friends! If you haven't already, and would like to support the arts in Rappahannock, please click [HERE](#) to join/renew online or download a copy of our membership letter from our website.

Thank you and be safe!

**Matthew Black, President, RAAC**

---

## Updates

### Art Tour - Notice to Artists and Galleries.

#### 16th Annual Art Tour, November 7 & 8, 2020

Planning for the annual Fall Art Tour is underway and we are operating on the assumption that it will happen in November. We'll continue to monitor government guidance regarding corona virus social distancing and other precautions affecting all our events. We'll keep you informed. Meanwhile, we wanted to let you know that returning Tour artists and galleries will be emailed applications by April 15th.

Artists interested in participating for the first time on the Tour need to schedule a studio visit with the Tour committee. Please contact Heather Wicke at [arttour@raac.org](mailto:arttour@raac.org) or 540-675-3368 to schedule when safe and feasible.

Completed applications, along with a refundable \$200 registration fee and artwork images, will be accepted up to July 15th. If you have questions or comments, please contact Heather Wicke at [arttour@raac.org](mailto:arttour@raac.org) or 540-675-3368.

.



RAAC has opened an **Instagram** account to share the beauty of Rappahannock County. Especially during these difficult times, being able to express creativity and share what we see is beneficial to all of us.

To just enjoy what pictures others are posting on **Instagram**, search for raacpix or click [here](#). To join in posting your own, you need a public Instagram account, then post a picture and hashtag raacpix and it will automatically post to our account. We'll let you know if there's a lot of community interest in this kind of sharing

---

## Claudia Mitchell Arts Fund

To share the joy of creativity, we're giving you updates on eight of our Mitchell Fund Grantees from 2019. Stay tuned for the other half next month. And in June we'll announce who the 2020 recipients will be!

### Dulcimer Museum

#### 2019 Mitchell Fund Grant:

*Sound system in the new  
performance space at  
Estes Mill*

John Halberg's **Dulcimer Museum** will be located in the renovated Estes Mill in Sperryville. Renovating the old mill has had many challenges and construction progress has been slow. The ground floor, with its beautiful stone work, will be the area destined for live performances. Once the building is ready, John's Mitchell Fund grant will be used to purchase the sound system. Meanwhile John has been acquiring instruments from collectors and other sources that will eventually be on display in the upper floors of the mill.



Photo by Ray Boc



### Lorraine Duisit 2019 Mitchell Fund Grant:

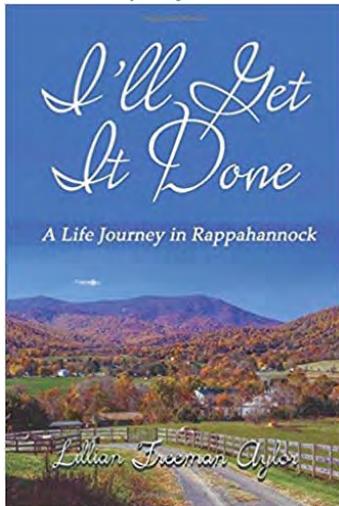
*Recording & production of an album of original songs, in  
partnership with bandmate Smiggy Smith*

From **Lorraine** about her project:

"Although the current crisis has slowed our progress, Smiggy and I hope to soon put the final touches on the recording and move to the mixing and production stage. We are delighted by local musicians' contributions, including Forrest Marquisee's brilliant and inventive pedal steel parts, and my son Evan Espinola's soulful, impromptu first-take lead vocal on one of my songs "Can we". Thanks to Mathew Black for coming to the library to photograph Robin Purnell's exquisite painting (of me!), so we can begin the cover design."

---

**Lillian Aylor**  
**2019 Mitchell Fund Grant**  
*Memoir project*



With her Mitchell Fund grant, and the help of friends, **Lillian Aylor** wrote a powerful book called *I'll Get It Done*, which tells the story of her life, and the story of Rappahannock county. Aylor was born in Gid Brown Hollow in 1938, in a cabin built by her great-grandfather. Her book explores "a strong African-American woman's journey before and after segregation, from a log cabin in the Blue Ridge foothills to quiet prominence in her community."



Photo by Ray Boc

---

**Belle Meade School**  
**2019 Mitchell Fund grant:**  
*Student design project, "Open a Door to Rappahannock County"*

**Belle Meade School's** colorful 9-panel screen debuted on the stage of this year's Art Tour Headquarters Gallery at the Washington School. Using their own style and imaginations students in grades 6 through 12 were given a recycled door to paint their own thoughts and images from around the county. The doors were hinged together to create one large mural combining all of their ideas into one.



Photos by John Glass

---

## Arts and Crafts Camp

2019 Mitchell Fund Grant:

*Scholarships and art supplies*

Janet Kerig's **Arts and Crafts Camp** took place in at the Hearthstone School last July, 2019. Children ages 3-12 made baskets, beeswax candles, felted wool animals, beaded jewelry, watercolor paintings, plant print scarves, just to mention some of the creations. Each week ended with a performance - complete with drumming, singing and dancing - for parents and family. The children learned from professional artist, musician and master crafts person Janet Kerig and choreographer, Waldorf teacher and dancer Kitty Keyser.



Photo by Ray Boc

---

## Headwaters

2019 Mitchell Fund Grant:

*Summer Youth Chorus*

A youth chorus made up of 26 singers performed at Castleton's Theatre House. The singers, who ranged in age from second grade to twelfth, were led by Keith Hudspeth and Bonny Tynch, and accompanied by Wendy Aichele. And another group of student singers, a total of 27 singers from Rappahannock and Culpeper counties, performed in a program organized by **Headwaters**.



---

## **Piedmont Symphony Orchestra**

### **2019 Mitchell Fund Grant:**

*Music mentoring  
program with band  
students at  
Rappahannock County  
High School*



Photos by Ray Boc

Nine members of the **Piedmont Symphony Orchestra and Capital Winds Ensemble** led by George Etheridge gave a master class and a side-by-side rehearsal to the Rappahannock High School Concert Band on February 29. RCHS band director Jason Guira was thrilled — “educational outreach programs such as this allow students to benefit from positive mentoring relationships from accomplished musicians and give our student access to skills that can prove invaluable to their development as musicians.”



---

## **Clayton Pearson**

### **2019 Mitchell Fund Grant:**

*Equipment to expand  
his art to be a business*

**Clayton's** passion for woodworking was sparked got interested in woodworking at Rappahannock County High School. With his Mitchell Fund grant, he has been able to advance his skills and product line by getting the key equipment he needs to become a working artist.



Photos by Nol Putnam





A message from Castleton Festival, in case you missed it: Many of you will remember the performances by Wynton Marsalis during the first summer of his Jazz Academy at Castleton. I would like to quote Wynton's comment on the current challenges impacting the Arts: "Although our hall may temporarily be dark to audiences, the light and love in this music will shine brightly." Castleton will soon open its Archives and begin streaming a series of our performances on the [Castleton Festival website](#). We hope this will brighten your social distancing efforts. Stay tuned for further information.



FRIEND ON FACEBOOK



VISIT RAAC WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Our mailing address is:**

PO Box 24

Washington VA 22747

**Questions, thoughts: email** [newsletter@raac.org](mailto:newsletter@raac.org)