

The Tribune Democrat

BY KELLY URBAN

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Arts center cuts ribbon on museum



With the cut of a ribbon, the area welcomed its newest arts facility.

On Thursday, officials with the Community Arts Center of Cambria County officially dedicated the M. Josephine Paul Family Museum at the Westmont facility.

"We are very much looking forward to having this addition to our arts center and enrich our community for many years to come," said J. Ross Stewart, president of the arts center's board of directors.

"This day, we remember the remarkable late Josephine Paul and her tremendous bequest that made this addition possible."

Paul, a Johnstown native and art educator in the Greater Johnstown School District for 20 years, had her work displayed in hundreds of national, international, juried and invitational shows.

"The M. Josephine Paul Family Museum project actually began about 20 years ago when we received an endowment from the Josephine Paul estate consisting of all of her art works, a number of pieces of furniture, as well as a substantial amount of money," said John Boderocco, vice president of finance on the

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arts center's board. "We took those funds and invested them knowing that someday we'd be in the position to build a facility where they could be displayed and we could use the facility for other purposes for the community."

The \$2.8 million, 5,549 square-foot, two-story museum is connected to the Goldhaber-Fend Fine Arts Center building.

The first floor features Paul's collection and personal effects, and includes a theatrical performance space. The space also allows for museum tours, rotating school art displays, rentals and venue usage, lectures, music events and Log Art Theatre and music productions.



The second floor provides additional space for classes, workshops, summer arts camps, weddings, receptions and other rental uses.

In front of the museum is a 2,371-square-foot amphitheater that can be used for music and theater productions, weddings, receptions, rentals, lectures, fundraisers, events and summer camps.

"This is a wonderful addition for the overall West Hills community and we really needed an additional facility where we could have larger gatherings," Boderocco said. "It also brings a new theater aspect that we really haven't had in the West Hills for a long time, and we hope it'll continue to bring additional people into the facility."

He said the goal is to expand on the offerings in the museum.

"We believe there's a great deal of opportunity for additional plays that we plan on having, and also bringing in additional exhibits from further away," Boderocco said.

"That'll give us a chance to bring in more people, not only from our local community, but from outside the area as well."

Angela R. Godin, executive director of the arts center, said seeing the M. Josephine Paul Family Museum come to fruition is a long time coming.

"I hope people are able to experience the fullness of her art and be able to cherish what this community meant to her," Godin said. "Her legacy will live on forever in this space."

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