



Paint The People 2016 will be held at the John Pettibone Fields, located on Pickett District Road in New Milford, CT, June 11, 2016, 12 Noon - 8pm

What is Paint The People?

Paint The People, (PTP), can be described as an interactive art installation where the audience creates, experiences, and becomes the art at the paint-filled centerpiece of this full-day festival featuring activities for all ages and celebrating local artists through dance, music and visual arts. The event draws a broad audience from the arts community and general public of Litchfield and Fairfield Counties and from the tristate region.

The components of the festival include: 1. Over 15 different experimental paint activities for all ages, including a "paint-by-number" mural on a working vehicle, paint Tug of War and Giant Spin-art, Paint Obstacle Course and many more; 2. Paint-Along workshops by known local artists; 3. An "Artist Village" presenting artists creating art in a variety of media; 4. Live music by local bands playing all day; and food and drink vendors for rejuvenation!

What Is Village Center for the Arts?

VCA is a 16-year-old, community-based 501 (c)(3) nonprofit fine art organization located on the New Milford Town Green at 12 Main Street. With its unparalleled role as a community arts resource, VCA is uniquely capable of organizing community events and public programs such as PTP. VCA services include fine arts classes 7 days per week, to generalized and specialized audiences including special needs youth and adults, after school (latchkey) children, low-income and at-risk youth, and children and adults showing great promise in the arts. We also operate an open studio with a vast array of art supplies and equipment. We conduct a vibrant summer camp program during school vacations, and during school breaks. We opened a Pottery Studio Annex 3 years ago, which is in constant motion and attracted all kinds of people to try out clay as an art medium.

Most importantly, we represent the arts within the community at public events, including exhibits to celebrate and display the work of our artist-clients. Everything about the way we conduct our classes, and design and operate the studio fosters an atmosphere of inclusiveness, creativity and acceptance.

VCA's mission is to provide a nurturing environment for artistic creativity and development through educational fine arts programs and events for all ages.

Our motto is "Art For Everyone"

Where do the proceeds go?

ALL profit raised by Paint The People are returned to the community through Scholarships and our Free Homework Initiative, allowing any child to come and work on a school-assigned project that involves art, COMPLETELY FOR FREE. This levels the field so all children assigned homework that would cost their family money, now have access to the same supplies as the wealthier children!

How it began:

Paint The People, (PTP), grew out of a realization that most people within our community approach art in a one-dimensional, non-interactive way that requires one to seek out art experiences, to view or create art on a flat plane, with limited media, or within a confined space - rather than surrender to creative license and be immersed within art. People are often hesitant to participate in art, are frustrated by barriers of access and resources, and fear failure. People "do" art alone - they do not typically participate together in creating art. The principals of VCA had a vision of bringing people together to create and experience a diversity of art mediums together in a wholly new, fun, fear-free and universally accessible way. Building on experiences at music festivals and of communal gatherings across the country, they set out to create a social celebration of artistic creativity, the first of its kind in the United States!

The first Paint The People, held in 2012, drew an audience of 1500, and featured over 45 local artists, musicians and the dance troupe Pilobolus. 160 volunteers helped to plan, publicize and execute the event. Student ambassadors were able to mobilize a segment of the population that is not always easy to reach for public events. Social media served as an additional springboard for local awareness and a cool vibe. Local business sponsors provided underwriting of \$13,000, not including the thousands of dollars in in-kind support, including the donation of a Jeep Cherokee for the "Paint By Number on a Working Car" (that's now being driven around the community) – an incredible result for a first-time, unknown event.

PTP participants came warily to the town playing fields and emerged covered from head-to-toe in bright colors and grins after joining giant tug-of-wars over paint-slicked game boards, firing paint-soaked sponges from pressure-guns at a mural, participating in acrylic painting and cartooning workshops, splattering giant spin-art canvasses, watching artists create their art form before their eyes, face painting each-others faces, leaving their mark on a 24' long mural, and on and on. Informal exit surveys suggested that not one would consider missing next year's fun.

PTP 2013 inspired early and active interest in corporate sponsorships. Expanded community support came in the form of constant FB chatter, early ticket purchase, widespread public knowledge of PTP and media coverage due to an active PR plan. We added more paint activities. Planning included past event attendees. More exhibitors created art at the event, our Nightfall Dance Tent targeted youth activities and hours specifically for late teens and young adults. We attracted a diverse, international audience. Revenues increased due to attendance and sponsorship. Over 3000 people attended with a volunteer staff of over 200.

Other municipalities' economic development directors approached VCA, attempting to entice us to bring this successful event to their communities.

We have achieved our vision regarding Paint The People; the people came, but they did not merely look upon the art, they participated in it, they had a relationship with the art, and they did it together - in this incredibly free-flowing, non-judgmental, completely accessible way not limited by age, gender, race, disability, social status, social category, or prior experience.

We expect 5000 people this year from at least 6 countries; but the majority, local families.

The Future:

At Paint The People 2016, our 5th year, we hope to draw even more people to New Milford, and further our capacity to continue this special, and still one-of-a-kind in the country, annual event. PTP will engage local business support for art in a breadth and magnitude that is unprecedented in this area. From the outset, our business community has seen the potential for this event to draw increased tourism and commerce to New Milford. Our plan is to continue to grow PTP as a major destination over the next 10 years. As it gains notoriety, New Milford will become known as an arts hub, the "Gateway" to the arts communities of Litchfield County, and will continue to draw additional artists to the area, further enriching the pool of talent and reinforcing the tourist draw.

The Community served by Paint The People:

Paint The People, (PTP), will reach a broad spectrum of Greater New Milford, Litchfield and Fairfield Counties, CT, and the tristate area including NYC and Boston. This was our experience with PTP 2012 - 2015 and we anticipate an even farther reach and larger attendance this coming year. Over 4000 people attended last year's event, covering 4 generations of families. The youngest spotted were children just old enough to put their hand in paint and make their first artistic mark. Evaluations results showed that attendees included a wide range of ethnicities and income levels. It was beautiful to see.

Discussions on FaceBook referring to the 2015 event indicate an even farther reach of new attendees. To ensure that no community member is excluded, free passes will again be available through Social Services of New Milford for those who are eligible for services. Our Planning Committee and Activity Captains represents a diversity in age, ethnicity, and economic status, and includes over 30 volunteers representing high school and college students, parents, artists, full-time and weekend residents, business owners, and chamber of commerce members.

In planning for PTP 2016 we have solicited feedback and planning assistance from the Northwest Arts Council, the town Economic Development Director, received suggestions from the New Milford Commission on the Arts, past PTP participants, and from the community. We are connecting with local business channels for further integration of town economic activities.

Volunteers we need:

VCA is supportive of diversity in artistic style and expression, and in all aspects strives to be inclusive of the great variety of approaches and experiences of individual artists. It is a goal of PTP to be able to accommodate as much of this variety as possible and we will actively seek to recruit diverse artist and participants for the event. Currently, VCA is in the process of securing partnerships with more than 40 artists and musicians to perform, display, and create their artwork on-site at the event.

We need 200 total Volunteers to run this event. The commitment can be as little as 2 hours or as much as 6 days in a row, and everything in between. Volunteers can register at VCA or by phone, 860-354-4318. The possible volunteer jobs that are available are:

Committee Member (Planning, organizing)

Activity Captain (Run an activity the day of, with prep time and clean up)

Activity Co-Captain (assist Captain in all)

Artists Creating their work (on-site for public to watch)

Worker Bees: Assisting with:

Paint Prep

Field Set-up of Festival

Work at an Activity

Security Detail

Breakdown of Festival

Publicity Person

Marketing Person

How to Sponsor PTP, so this Festival Happens!:

We cannot offer this marvelous festival with-out community support.

To become a major sponsor, the sponsor of an activity or to simply buy an ad in our unusual pocket sized festival program, please contact Kevin Bielmeier at kevinbielmeier@gmail.com.

Thank you for considering participation in Paint The People at ANY level!