

PENTANGLE ARTS

Celebrating 46 Years!

As seen in the Vermont Standard – Dec. 17, 2020

Our Condolences to Pentangle's Founder Polly Billings

I would like to dedicate this column to Polly Billings who passed away in her home on December 2nd.

As noted in the December 10th Vermont Standard, there would not be a Vermont Council on the Arts or Pentangle Arts without her leadership, vision and commitment to the arts and community. She understood the importance of connecting students and educators to the arts, and that arts and education go hand in hand. Hence, Youth in Arts programming remains a cornerstone of Pentangle's mission.

The small group of artists, educators, who met in Polly's living room, at Pentangle's founding in 1974, knew even before reams of published studies confirmed that the arts can inspire creativity, confidence, collaboration, cultural awareness and empathy among students and educators alike. Occupying a central role in the village Polly also knew the arts could strengthen the community culturally and economically.

As a dedicated historic preservationist, she would be pleased to know that there is a focused effort to renovate and rejuvenate the Woodstock Town Hall building so it remains a vital community resource for generations to come. We share our condolences with her dear friends and family.

Her passing is a powerful reminder of the difference an individual can make in the lives of so many through conviction, a sense of purpose, vision, and determination to see a project through no matter the challenges faced along the way.

Future of Movies

Despite the increase of COVID cases in Vermont there is a glimmer of hope with vaccine's arrival in the state this week. It remains hard to predict when we can re-open the theatre given the need for widespread distribution and inoculation of the two-dose

vaccine to most of the population.

Warner Brothers is certainly not helping movie theatres nationwide announcing last week that 17 of its films slated for release in 2021 will be available on the streaming platform HBO Max on the same day they are released. That includes *Wonder Woman 1984*, Lin Manuel Miranda's musical *In the Heights* and the sci-fi epic *Dune*.

NPR reported one director's reaction to the decision in an essay in *Variety*. *Dune* director Denis Villeneuve wrote: "With this decision, AT&T [Warner Bros.' parent] has hijacked one of the most respectable and important studios in film history. There is absolutely no love for cinema, nor for the audience here."

Our patrons can be assured we will go the distance to make our movie and theatre going experience fully engaging, enjoyable and immersive. We will improve and expand our concession offerings, adding pre-screening raffles, a clean sanitized theatre, and of course our famous maple butter popcorn. We will make it well worth your while to leave the home entertainment center, and the couch which after ten months of streaming probably reeks of stale popcorn, chips and spilled soda!

Wassail 2020

A huge shout out to the Chamber of Commerce, Billings Farm and Museum, Pentangle's Santa Clause, the wonderful scavenger hunt, and homeowners and business owners who decorated their doors and windows. While not our usual Wassail Weekend there was a festive feeling in the Village, once again proving when we come together even in the darkest of times, we create light and a sense of community *and* normalcy.

Happy Holidays to All.