



Leadership change coming to Lewiston Council on the Arts, as staff retirement announced

The Lewiston Council on the Arts on Wednesday announced that, after 30 years of working together, the staff is retiring at the end of 2022 – and a leadership transition process is beginning immediately.

Although Executive Director Irene Rykaszewski and Artistic Director Eva Nicklas are the most visible representatives of the organization, Kathryn Serianni and Tim Henderson have been integral to the success of the team. All four came on board at approximately the same time, and planned, coordinated and promoted all the programs together, with the help of a volunteer board of directors.

“It’s been an amazing privilege to work with such creative friends and colleagues, and I’m so proud of the part we’ve played in creating a community that both residents and visitors love,” Rykaszewski said.

“Eva, Irene, Tim and Kathryn have left an incredible legacy for Lewiston, Niagara County, and the entire region,” LCA Board President Tod Kniazuk said. “Their retirement is well earned, and we can’t thank them enough for all they’ve done – and for being so willing to help in the transition to the next leaders of the LCA.”

The organization began as an informal group of local artists and their friends, who volunteered to present the annual Lewiston Art Festival. Under the leadership of Rykaszewski and Nicklas, the LCA evolved into a community-based 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit art council presenting a diverse range of cultural programs, as well as festivals, events, concerts, classes, historic and ghost walks, speaker series, literary events and children’s programs.

In addition, the staff opened a cooperative art gallery, a Native American Art Gallery, and oversaw the siting of numerous public art pieces and parks throughout the community.

A search committee will oversee the process to choose Rykaszewski’s successor. It will then work with the board to build a new team. The two directors will help during the process to assure a smooth transition.

Visit www.artcouncil.org for a job description and application guidelines.

Local leaders said it will be no easy task replacing the LCA team.

Niagara River Region Chamber of Commerce President Jennifer Pauly said, “Talk about big shoes to fill – more like an entire shoe department! The staff at the Lewiston Council on the Arts is like none other. They truly love what they do and have all put in 200% to grow the arts council and provide rich programming for our community. We are so very lucky to have had them lead the charge to make sure the arts are a priority here. They will be missed!”

Village of Lewiston Mayor Anne Welch said, “Eva, Irene, Tim and Kathryn, I am so very sad to hear of your retirement, but I know it is well-deserved. It is hard to put into words how grateful this community is to have such a wonderful Council on the Arts under your leadership. I thank you for your amazing talent, dedication, passion and hard work in creating one of the best (if not the best) art festivals in Western New York, and the incredible Marble Orchard. All of your many endeavors have been a success, and enjoyed by thousands of residents and visitors alike. But most of all, I thank you for your cherished friendship over the years. I know that you will find qualified replacements to carry on your legacy, but no one will ever come close to replacing you.”



Pictured, from left, Lewiston Council on the Arts staff members Irene Rykaszewski, Timothy Henderson, Kathryn Serianni and Eva Nicklas