

Editorial COMMENTARY

by Tom Starland, Editor and Publisher

Summer Has Arrived

After what seemed like an actual Spring season the heat of Summer has arrived - as it should. After all, we are in the South. But I've seen predictions that for some of us in the Carolinas it could be a cooler than normal Summer and for others a hotter than normal Summer. They also say the hurricane season could be ho hum this year. Predicting the weather seems to be a true science that no one has perfected. It probably won't snow, but you can never tell.

The point is - don't let the weather keep you from enjoying the visual arts. There will be lots of exhibits and art shows going on - so go see some. Don't sit at home waiting for the weather to be just right.

ArtFields© Needs to Find Its Voice

As usual, the minute the ArtFields© event is over the organization which puts it on in Lake City, SC, goes silent. Other than announcing the winners of the prizes, not much has been heard from Lake City about the results of this year's event.

Did more people come to see ArtFields© than the last year or the first two years for that matter? Did more people register to vote? Did more of those people who registered to vote - actually vote? How much artwork was sold during the event? And, the real question everyone wants to know is how did celebrity Bill Murray end up in Lake City on the last day of the event and will he come back again?

ArtFields© has made only four posts on FaceBook since the ending day of the event. And, not much of anything has shown up in news publications outside of the Pee Dee area. In fact, hardly anything was written about ArtFields© by any

major newspaper (with the exception of the Florence Morning News) this whole year about ArtFields©, and I was told they purchased advertising in every newspaper in SC, NC, and GA. If that was so - they got the short end of the deal there - as most advertisers demand some coverage to go with their advertising.

I know I'm planning on offering my usual 2 cents worth of commentary on different phases of the event but I can start here by saying that ArtFields© needs to do a better job of using social media to promote their event - before, during and after the event. Everyone I run into wants to hear something about ArtFields©.

They are not doing a good job of telling their story and the tragedy of it all is - social media is free. You just have to do it. You have to work it. You have to feed it.

The only excuse I can offer in defense of ArtFields© is that it is in transition. Ray McBride, who was the executive Director of the Community Museum Society which took over operation of ArtFields© in the middle of year two, has left to become the Director of the Beaufort County Library system right after the event ended. He originally came from the Florence County Library system to head up the Community Museum Society.

In my opinion, he will be hard to replace, but he will be replaced. It's a loss for me as he responded well to questions I asked about ArtFields© and he made it easy for me to assist ArtFields© in being a better event and promoting the event to artists and the general public - which is more important than you would think. Not all events who crave publicity make it easy for you to give it to them by providing you with timely info you can use. I hope the new leadership will be as open as McBride was. I really do.

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HALSEY 100

March 7 - September 7, 2015
SOUTH CAROLINA STATE MUSEUM

This mini exhibit examines the work of Charleston artist William Halsey in the 100th anniversary year of his birth. The exhibit includes original works of art that look into the important career of Halsey, who was a pioneer of contemporary art in the Palmetto State and helped pave the way for other contemporary artists.

* HALSEY 100 is included with general admission or museum membership.

