

Town of Amherst
Arts & Culture in Public Places Board
(ACPPB)
Annual Report – 2025
Including 2026 Plan



ARTS & CULTURE
IN PUBLIC PLACES, AMHERST, NY • EST. 1998

I. Mission

To promote public art and culture within the town and to collaborate and cooperate with various and appropriate individuals, groups, associations, organizations and institutions concerned with art and culture to promote, ensure and enhance the function, object and mission of the visual and performing arts in the Town of Amherst.

II. Introduction

The Arts and Culture in Public Places Board (ACPPB) was created in 1998 and continues to be active in advancing the appreciation of art in the Town of Amherst. As a nine-member volunteer board, ACPPB strives to be a true advocate for the free access to arts and culture in our town by creating, managing, and partnering on the programs that appeal to the residents of Amherst, New York.

Additionally, this report is dedicated to our active past Chair, Sharon Rich, who passed away in 2025. All of the current projects and events held through 2025 and continuing in 2026 were instituted during her Chairmanship. Additionally, one of her ideas – to create an artistic opportunity for our young citizens was championed by another member, Burt Merriam, who unfortunately resigned due to an illness. Burt created and ran the very successful “*artstart*” program that will be discussed later in this report.

III. Meeting Dates

To be held on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm in the Town Municipal building Council members’ meeting room.

IV. Key Projects and Events:

A. Let’s Do Lunch

This is our distinguished speaker series that focuses on various arts and cultural themes, including local and national history. The event itself is at no cost to the attendee, due to the pro-bono nature of the educational entertainment. There is catering for these luncheons that are provided by establishments found locally for a small fee to the attendee. This weekday program is held on the third Thursday of the month from spring through late summer.

2025 Series:

Date	Speaker	Topic	Attendance
April 17	Carol Ann Harlos	Master Gardener – Herbs	21
May 15	Fran Davis & Annie Gross	Gold Star and Blue Star Mothers	20
June 19	Alan Nowicki	Roycroft Stories and History	20
July 17	Daniel F. Korn	Civil War Stories	24
August 21	Jack Edson	Fabric Artist	25
September 18	Anne E. Conable	Buffalo Maritime Center	16
October	Sotto Voce	Opera	Canceled due to speaker/performer illness

2026: Events have and will focus on patriotic themes to recognize and celebrate the 250th Anniversary of the United States.



Luncheon on May 21, 2026 at the Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village featuring Casey Bukowski, WWII veteran (B-17 crewmember and former POW).

2026 Series:

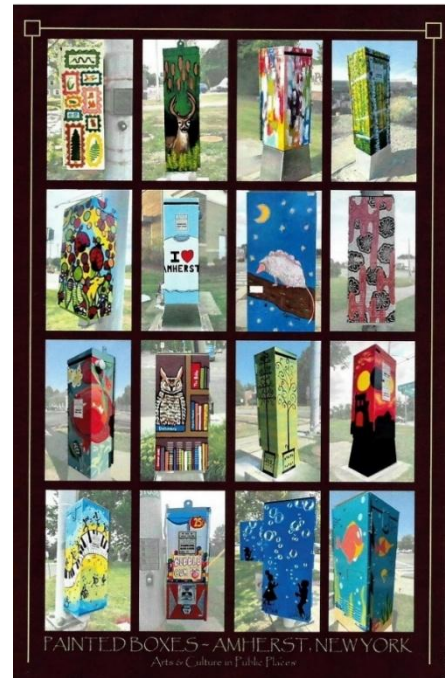
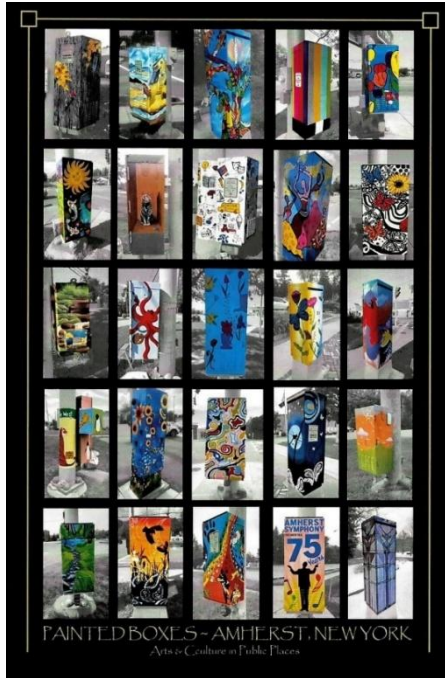
Date	Speaker or Topic	Venue	Caterer	Attendance
April 16	Honor Flight	NW Amherst CC	Blue Fire BBQ Catering	21
May 21	WWII Veteran (flags)	BNHV	Olympia Grill	39
June 18	Mark Lozo from TR Inaugural Site (constitution booklets)	BNHV	Carmines	31
July 16	Buffalo History Museum will present on the Pan- American Exposition	BNHV	Dash's Market	34
August 5	Sotto Voce	Randall Church	Charlie the Butcher	
September 17	Bren T. Price, Sr. from The Buffalo Presidential Center	NW Amherst CC	Lebro's Restaurant	

B. "Painted Boxes" Initiative

This highly popular project was instituted in 2019 and has been run every summer. Coordinated through the Town's Engineering Department, each year approximately eight traffic signal cabinets (boxes) are chosen based upon intersection visibility exposure and a balanced distribution throughout the town. Local artists submit their design to participate in an annual contest for selection. To date, 53 traffic signal cabinets have been creatively painted and can be seen at intersections located across the Town of Amherst.

In 2025, a second large poster displaying our Painted Boxes from 2024-2025 was created to complement our first Painted Boxes poster (2019 – 2023). A set of these posters is proudly hanging in Town Hall's vestibule entry on the 2nd floor. An additional set of posters are displayed at our various events.

Postcards of these posters are distributed to the community at our events.



2025 Painted Boxes:

Location	Artist(s)	Title/Theme
Campbell & Dodge	Patty Ossa & Cindy Angrisano	Piano & Jazz
Millersport & Crosspoint	David Thiel	Abstract
Niagara Falls Blvd. & Tonawanda Creek Rd.	Kim Gryckiewicz	Deer
Sheridan & Bailey	Margo Davis	Shirts
Sheridan & Millersport	Mike Maddigan	Birch Trees
Sweethome & Maple	Makena St. George	Fruit
Sweethome & Skinnersville	Courtney Zach	Animals
Wehrle & Lamark	Alex LoDico	Postcard

For 2026, in preparation for the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, twelve traffic signal cabinets have been chosen for painting. All designs have a patriotic America 250 theme. The contest winners were chosen in April and approximately half have been completed at the time of this report.

2026 Painted Boxes:

Location	Artist	Title/Theme	2026 Status
Bailey Ave. & Long Meadow Rd.	Ali Lazik	Groovy Eagle	In process
Harlem & Westmoreland	Jessica Graham	America, The Beautiful	Completed
Main & Cayuga	Courtney Zach	Flags with constitution excerpts	In process
Main & N. Forest	Margo Davis	Flowing flag with USA icons	Completed
Maple & Culpepper	Makena St. George	Girl pointing to stars	Completed
Millersport & N. French Rd.	Danielle Meyer	Apple Pie	In process
N. French & Robinson Rd.	Roberta (Robin) Sullivan	Red, white, and blue tree with fireworks	Completed
Paradise & Klein	Meghana Bapardekar	Eagle & Niagara Falls	Completed
Sheridan Drive & Campus Drive	Dave Cinquino	United States seal	In process
Stahl & N. Forest	Kaleigh Day	Mount Rushmore	Completed
Werhle & George Karl	Margo Davis	USA birthday celebration	Completed

C. Town of Amherst Arts & Culture Grant Recommendations

ACPPB solicits grant applications from the Amherst community and makes recommendations for Arts & Culture grants to the Town Board. Grants approved by the Town Board are reflected in the “Celebrations” line in the town’s budget. The following groups were recommended by the ACPPB, and subsequently approved by the Town Board in 2025 for grants to be allocated and distributed in the 2026 budget:

Organization’s Name	ACPPB Recommended	TOA Board Approved	Service to be Provided to Town
Jewish Community Center	\$2,000	\$5,000	Free attendance to one of their Cover-to-Cover Book Fair Event
Amherst Symphony Orchestra	\$11,000	\$11,000	Small-group performances at local schools and senior residences, for the Amherst Rotary Club, and other organizations.
Friends of Harmony	\$3,000	\$3,000	Several free concerts within the town
Amherst Chamber Ensembles	\$2,000	\$2,000	10 public concerts at Trinity Church, additional concerts at various senior facilities.

2026: Application for grant solicitation is posted and being publicized with an August 18th deadline for 2027 grant considerations.

D. ACPPB Table and Tent

The ACPPB has a tent available during selected dates at the Village of Williamsville’s Farmers’ Market as well as at the Farmers’ Market in Bassett Park. We display our projects as well as solicit local Amherst Arts & Cultural groups to provide us with literature that we hand out in our “Information Bag.” At our tent we also hold our “*artstart*” program for our young Amherstonians in which we have a themed art project.

artstart

Town of Amherst, NY

FREE-Drop in
Children's art workshops
sponsored by
the Amherst Arts and
Culture in Public Places
Board



ACPPB Board member Burt Merriam manning our tent at the Williamsville Farmers' Market with his craft for children: yarn magical wands.

2025 *artstart* Series:

Date	Number of Children Participating	Project
June 8 (Bassett)	140	Clothespin buddies
July 5 (Williamsville)	25	Clothespin buddies
July 11 (Williamsville)	50	Rock painting
July 18 (Williamsville)	60	Trinket boxes, clothespin buddies, painted rocks
July 25 (Williamsville)	25	Wands, a few trinket boxes

2026: Dates at the Village of Williamsville's Farmers' Market have been selected. All *artstart* crafts will be patriotically America 250 themed projects.

2026 *artstart* Series:

Date	Location	Craft	Number of Children Participating	Number of Adults either Spoken to, Handed Flyers, or Received our Promotional Bag of Handouts	Number of Special Flag Stars and Pocket Constitution Booklets Handed Out
June 20	Williamsville Farmers' Market	Patriotic Wands	51	44	N/A
June 27		Firework Yarn	59	65	N/A
July 11		Americana Paper Quilt	60	151	45
July 18		Tin Punch			
July 25		Clothespin Soldier Buddy			
TBD in August possibility	Bassett Park	Miscellaneous			

E. Kite Flying in Bassett Park – September 27, 2025

This was a new event this year for ACPPB. We worked with the Great Lakes Kitefliers Society where they flew kites for attendees to gaze upon. An estimated 200+ people attended this event. In addition, we also held our *artstart* program for the children, and approximately 165 crafts were completed, which included coloring, wooden crafts, and kite making kits.

2026: This year's kite flying program in Bassett Park will be held during the Town's Harvest Festival on September 26th. Plans are underway to secure craft kite kits.

F. Conclusion

In a national public opinion survey conducted by the Americans for the Arts, 72% of Americans believe that the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity. Through our various projects, ACPPB has exposed various forms of art to tens of thousands of people who walk or drive by our Painted Boxes, thousands of people that have attended events of organizations supported by the grant program, and a minimum of 650 people that directly participated in ACPPB 2025 organized events. ACPPB endeavors to unify our community through our initiatives.