

Contact: Denise Buzzelli
PCCC
Phone: 207-564-7533

1033 South St.
Dover Foxcroft ME 04426
exdir@piscataquischamber.com



PRESS RELEASE

MAIN ST. ART STUDIO OPENS IN SANGERVILLE, MAINE

Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on January 4th

4-6pm, Ribbon Cutting at 5pm

Sangerville, ME: Something new and exciting is happening at the corner of Doughty Hill Rd. and Main in Sangerville. On January 4th, the Piscataquis Chamber of Commerce will hold a Ribbon-Cutting during the Grand Opening of the Main St. Art Studio, Inc., a non-profit organization created for the local community. "It is a space where artists can display their work, the public can enjoy a free gallery, and community events and fundraisers will be hosted", said Wendy Lorigan, the studio's founder; "Our goal is to offer low-to-no-cost art classes for children and adults in the community through donations and grants."

Located at 93 Main St., the completely renovated studio which once housed the Main St. Hair Salon is barely recognizable. "The studio is just beautiful," said Denise Buzzelli; Chamber director, "It has been completely transformed into a welcoming, peaceful space; a perfect learning environment for classes, with a color scheme that provides an attractive backdrop for artists to showcase their work." Lorigan chose the location for its high visibility, hopefully resulting in a greater awareness of the non-profit both with locals and visitors to the region during the tourism season.

Wendy is a wife, a mother of two, and a lover of the arts. "I wanted to go to college for art, but that was a risky career at the time. It wasn't until the 2008 recession that I realized life is short and I should do what makes my heart sing... I continued to study art for four years of undergrad school while I majored in English and secondary education."

Though some may find it strange to open a business in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic; it was, in fact, the virus that encouraged Wendy to do this *now*. "[It] gave us more time together than we have had since our kids were born and it allowed us to see what was really important in our lives. I wanted a job in the arts and I also wanted to have the flexibility to be around for my boys", she said.

Wendy was deeply motivated by a desire to share her love for the arts with the community, but it was her son that inspired her to launch the non-profit in conjunction with the art studio. She explained, "My oldest son was diagnosed with level II autism just after his third birthday. We have had many challenges along the way as we navigated his needs and ways to support him. He has been receiving speech and occupational therapy for just over a year and I see so much growth and joy in his life. I was able to use art and art therapy at home to help him overcome some of his sensory issues. It made me question if more kids would benefit from art as a way to express themselves. This is when I found the space, saw what it could be and what we could do there."

"I believe the town of Sangerville will greatly benefit from this," said Buzzelli, "The renovations are an investment into the town itself, and I think the gallery will be a catalyst for an art movement in this part of the

county.” Something new for children, adults, and families is a cause for excitement, explains Buzzelli, “Covid has greatly limited indoor activities. This will provide an opportunity for families within the same household to attend a class or visit the gallery together, it will be a creative outlet for many, and through the non-profit, they can do so without financial burden.”

Local artists, too, will greatly profit from having their work displayed at no cost in the gallery. “I have many artists, all from Maine,” said Lorigan, “They vary in age from four to in their 70’s, professionals and hobbyists, with works to include oils, acrylic, drawings, and photography.”

Artists who are interested in displaying their work can reach the studio through Facebook Messenger ([facebook.com/MainStreetArtStudioInc](https://www.facebook.com/MainStreetArtStudioInc)) or by calling (207) 270-0505. winter gallery hours, starting in January, are Monday 3-6 pm, Wednesday and Friday 12 to 3 pm, and by appointment.

The Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on January 4th will be a low-key gallery event, running from 4-6pm with a 5pm Ribbon Cutting. The event is open to chamber members and community members. RSVP not required but appreciated by calling the chamber at 207-564-7533 or responding to the announcement on the Chamber’s Facebook page. Current CDC restrictions apply. Masks and social distancing please.

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