

COMING JANUARY 2012: The James E. Winner Jr. Arts and Culture Center

By Mary James

DOWNTOWN SHARON will soon be home to the new James E. Winner Jr. Arts and Culture Center. Opening in January, the ACC is located at 98 E. State St. Along with a new name on the marquis, we are almost done completing the calendar for the first year's events.

The ACC will provide entertainment and educational events for people of all ages. Some of the events being planned are an "imagination station," an interactive experience for young children to learn about both visual and performing arts, a summer musical theater camp for teens, performances for adults, and workshops for all age groups. Although some of the workshops will be educational in a hands-on type learning environment, others will be lecture based. For example, some of the hands-on classes include oil painting, photography and stage craft, while lecture-based workshops include exploring a vegetarian lifestyle, cooking for food allergies and having healthy winter skin.

The center will host family friendly events, communitywide competitions, rotating art gallery shows and live music on weekday and weekend evenings as

the calendar allows. Special interest clubs are already in the planning stages. The idea is to have a variety of offerings for a variety of people. We don't want the expected, the obvious or the routine at the Arts and Culture Center. Rather, we want it to be something fresh, something

our new center, and the events on those dates will be planned with them specifically in mind. Also in the plans are a world class bridal event, a "Cultural Cafe," a free trade fair and a gift shop.

The center's opening also provides opportunities for volunteering, as we'll need volunteers for many of the events. Whether it's taking tickets, reading to a child, or teaching a class, there is likely a spot for anyone who wants to help.

The center is an operating fund under the Community Foundation of Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio, and is named in memory of James E. Winner Jr., an avid supporter of the arts and benefactor to the city.

"My husband would be pleased to know that his memory goes on in downtown Sharon, and in such a meaningful way - by reaching out to people with educational and en-

tertainment opportunities," Donna Winner said. ▽

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Mary James lives in Sharpsville with her husband and daughter. She is the event planner at ACC and enjoys writing, acting and directing.

Photos contributed.



The James E. Winner Arts & Culture Center will open in January in downtown Sharon.

new and something that will pull people into our area as well as serve our local residents.

Just as downtown Sharon has been a shopping destination for years, bringing shoppers in from several hours away, the ACC plans on marketing itself regionally to appeal to organized tour groups. We already have specific dates planned when we know bus tours will be visiting



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