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FEATURED

Deane Center makes progress on music garden

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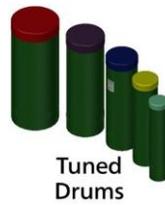
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Bringing Community and Music Together



Above is an artist's rendition of the instrument garden being created in memory of Celia Finestone.

The Celia J. Finestone Music Park is making progress on the lawn on the Deane Center on Main St., Wellsboro.

“This is going to be a jewel of our community as well as a tribute to Celia, and will be just another reason for people to visit Tioga County,” said Deane Center executive director Amy Welch.

The music park will eventually feature interactive, oversize instruments: a harp, a tuned drum, a serenade keyboard, pagoda bells and a duet keyboard that will come with music.

The instruments will be set in the round base that is now visible on the lawn. Hearts will mark the instrument locations and a large inset wrought iron heart will outline the base.

“The heart motif isn’t just a design,” said Welch. “After Celia died, her family was going through her things and found that every note she wrote had hearts on them and that if she knitted something she would knit a little heart into it.”

The musical sculptures will be interactive for all ages. The instruments can be adjusted for heights by adults.

“One of the nice things is that the park will be completely ADA compliant and inclusive for everyone,” said Welch. “And another idea is that school districts will be able to come over and carry out lesson plans based on the park.”

This community tribute has been in the works since 2020, when Finestone died at age 85. Finestone was a career nurse and an accomplished musician who played piano, organ and cello and mastered the harp after her retirement.

Finestone lived in Wellsboro from 1989 to 2020 and was a member of the Wednesday Morning Musicales and the Mansfield University Festival Chorus.

The music park, located on the western side of the lawn near the Warehouse Theater, will not intrude on the lawn space that is used for outdoor concerts and other events.

The ground had to be leveled to install the foundation, with a total cost of over \$40,000. The instruments have yet to be purchased and installed.

“When we finish is contingent on funding,” said Welch. “Along with the purchase of the instruments, we’ll need signage, lighting, landscaping and recognition plaques.”

Amy Welch, Russ Dodson, Daria Guelig, Peggy Detweiller, Molly Cary, Bill Hebe, Mary DeBockler and Kevin Connelly make up the music park’s guiding committee.

There will also be a tree in the center of the instruments. “We’re relying on Pete Herres and landscaper Barry Sharp to pick the tree,” Welch said.

Although grant money and private donations are coming in, Welch encourages community members and organizations to contribute to the building of this community memorial.

“We’re so appreciative of everyone who has contributed so far,” Welch said. “We can’t wait to see the final version.”

For more information on the music garden, Finestone’s life and legacy or to donate, visit www.deanecenter.com. Donations can also be mailed to The Deane Center, PO Box 102, Wellsboro, PA 16901 with “Music Garden” included on Memo line.

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