

# Nutfield News



July 18, 2019 • Volume 15 - Issue 28

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## Derry Artist Ties Craftsmanship and Community Together to Make Art Accessible

MACK LEATHURBY  
NUTFIELD NEWS

Derry has accelerated a friendly arts environment including the creation of a new cultural district this year. There have been quite a few visual and performing arts projects worth checking out and Derry has some of the best venues in N.H. for performing arts with the Derry Opera House, the Stockbridge Theatre at Pinkerton, and the Tupelo Music Hall.

The Greater Derry Arts Council and Public Arts Committee have stepped up to provide support for historic mural paintings, the Nutfield 300th Gala and musicals, including this week's Jekyll and Hyde, as well as, the upcoming Kids Coop Theatre production of Foot-loose, which will be staged at the Derry Opera House. We even have the Derry Homegrown Farm and Artisan Market that Yankee Magazine calls the best in N.H.

So, in celebration of Greater Derry arts, we are spotlighting community artists to recognize them for their talents and support of the arts in Derry. Our first spotlight is on Wendy Wetherbee, who is also one of the Derry Homegrown organizers.

Wendy Wetherbee is an artist and designer who lives and works in Derry.

She's a Tufts graduate and a graduate of the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, where her focus of study included photography. Today she works as a painter, photographer and a metalsmith. Her metalsmith work has brought her statewide recognition aligning her with the prestigious League of NH Craftsmen. Wetherbee juried in as a full member of the League in the area of Jewelry metals on her first try last October.

Wetherbee said, "Being a member of the League was a goal so precious to me that I almost never said it out loud. I used to attend the Sunapee Craftsman Fair with my grandparents as a child. My grandfather was a metalsmith and as a kid I watched him solder as well as craft giant copper flowers for my grandmother and that's what started my fascination working with metal. They instilled in me a reverence for fine craft. It took my husband and fellow League artist, Mike Gibbons, of Nutfield Pottery of Derry, years to finally push me hard enough to make the appointment to jury. When I was accepted, I was shocked, and it took me weeks to stop pinching myself."

Nature themes run through many of Wetherbee's pieces - feathers, ravens, owls, fish, turtles,



Derry's Wendy Wetherbee has been recognized by the N.H. League of Craftsmen for her Jewelry metals above is an example of her work titled 'Change is Beautiful Butterfly Medallion.' *Courtesy photos*

coyotes, and dragonflies. She often works in themes she personally observes and photographs - while hiking beautiful spots here in Derry. She shoots photos almost daily, and the images captured are often a reference for her media and metal work; her photographs capture her view of the world and stand alone as art works, as well. From her photography work one can appreciate she is a keen life observer with her own artistic view.

"We have so much wildlife here in Derry. Within a 3-mile radius of my home, I have seen eagles, osprey, gray fox, red fox, coyote, several species of owls, at least 50 species of songbirds, waterfowl, raccoons, porcupines, fishers, deer, otter, the list goes on. You don't

need to go far to see natural beauty, you just need to tune into it."

Last year, one of her photographs was published in National Wildlife Magazine, a publication that she has read since childhood. The photo chosen was photographed in her Derry backyard.

Wendy comes by her talent and love of nature genuinely, as she was born into a family peppered with artists (mother), musicians (sister and son), entrepreneurs and even farmers, many of which had a strong connection to the natural world.

"No matter what medium I work in, wildlife and special places of New Hampshire, are featured in my work, because it's my own personal habitat, and a large part of who I am. My

time outdoors, is what charges my batteries and keeps me whole. Making art is my way of giving back for the peace I get from that time. My hope is that my connection to the earth comes through in my art and inspires others to feel their own connection to the natural world around them."

Wendy is also founder of Wetherbee Creative, located in Derry. Along with her husband Neil, they provide design and marketing services to clients near and far. And as Board members of Derry Homegrown, the team works on a Pro Bono basis creating the marketing materials, signage and advertising needed to keep the farmers' market going each season. The Wetherbees also use Derry Home-

grown as platform to inject the arts into the community by ensuring the market has live music and a visual artist demonstration every week.

"It is so important people know artists are alive and well here in Derry. There are so many amazing things here right now, as people are doing great things to make art accessible here to everyone, and I am very dedicated to making sure I am part of making that happen."

Wendy's work can be found in these League galleries: Hanover, Meredith, Nashua, North Conway, and: Exeter Fine Crafts, Plumb Gallery, Ashland, NH and SEH Studios, Dover, NH. Contact her at [wendy@wetherbeecreative.com](mailto:wendy@wetherbeecreative.com) or at [www.puredichotomy.com](http://www.puredichotomy.com)