

"The Fields, The Farm, The Food" By Harry Zimpler

Exhibit features artworks depicting the natural beauty of local country landscapes, including the oil painting "Clouds Over Stringer Farm" by Susan Nicholas Gephart.

Landscape Exhibit draws on farms' natural beauty

The philosophy for the "The Fields, The Farm, The Food" exhibit is almost as important as the art. The common theme that brought the works of 11 local artists together was the desire to help depict and preserve the rural quality of life in Centre County.

"The group is called the Farmland Preservation Artists," said Sharon McCarthy, a member of the gallery committee for the BHCA. She also helped to organize the exhibit.

"The show is a collaborative project of the Art Alliance of Central Pennsylvania and the Centre County Farmland Trust."



In 2005, the 11 painters, watercolorists and collage artists came together to promote farmland preservation through the visual arts. "We are trying to show our appreciation of the farmland through our art," McCarthy said.

The group has had two small exhibits that were done for members of the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association in Harrisburg. The show at the Gamble Mill marks its first public exhibition. "And there will be many more, I think," McCarthy added.

The artists whose works are represented in the show use a variety of media including photography, collage, mixed media, watercolors, pastels and oils.

"We feel this is a very cohesive show. We all went to many of the same farms in Centre County to do our work. However, we all approached the subject in very different ways. We are trying to highlight farm life and the beauty of the rural areas in the county," McCarthy said.

All of the works in the show are for sale with a commission from each sale to be given to the Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association and to the farmland preservation group.

McCarthy noted that all the artists in the group are dedicated to preserving the quality of life in Centre County.

"We hope that our art shows will help to bring attention to many of the issues that are impacting

local farmers,' she said. "We want to encourage Centre county residents to buy local food products. We all cherish our landscape and worry about encroaching development. We hope to educate the public about the need to preserve our local food economy."

The artist represented in the exhibition include Kimberly Flick, Alice Kelsey, Jill Foster, Sharon McCarthy, Kathy Frank. Michelle Montes, Susan Nicholas Gephart, Roxanne Naydan, Sarah Harvey, Sarah Pollock, and Beth Holly Irvin.