

Trestle Inc. dedicated 2011 as the Year to Salute Our Heroes in an effort to recognize and honor the people in our community, in Newburgh, in Orange County and beyond, those many people who dedicate themselves selflessly and tirelessly in serving others, many times on a daily basis. These heroes sacrifice themselves to uphold America's freedoms and civil and human rights, protecting the lives of those they serve and in helping to improve the quality of life. They are our Veterans, our Soldiers, our Policemen, our Firefighters, our Emergency Medical Technicians, our Human and Civil Rights Advocates, and our Community leaders. The ideals and importance of America's freedoms and rights are formed in the minds and hearts of our youth through ongoing teachable moments inside and outside of classrooms. They reach, teach and inspire our youth. They are our Educators and our Parents, older siblings and extended family members; they are also our Youth. They cure and care for the sick. They are Medical Personnel. They listen, comfort, and advise, provide shelter, feed the hungry, and uplift the downtrodden, spiritually enriching the faiths of those in their service; they are the Clergy.

During 2011, Trestle Inc. created, organized and orchestrated a variety of artistic and cultural events that recognized and honored groups of community heroes.

Trestle Inc. began the year with a Musical Tribute to Salute Our Heroes, "Heroes Among Us," in collaboration with nationally and internationally renowned Vocalists and Musicians, students and staff from the NECSD and Bishop Dunn, ROTC at NFA, Senator Larkin, ArtsLEAF, Trestle Inc. Event Committee comprised of interested community representatives, the HVFCU Financial Services, Algonquin Supply, the Community Foundation of Orange and Sullivan, the Downing Film Theatre, Studio Nigh, John J. Lease Realtors, Sacred Heart Church, and the Church of St. Mary and many other local businesses and individuals.

This two-day event began with world-renowned Bass-Baritone Vocalist Patrick Carfizzi, West Point Vocalist MaryKay Messenger, GNSO Pianist Gordon Shacklett, Visual Graphic Designers and Artists Rita Tantillo and Victor Mirabella, and ArtsLeaf members providing a full day of mentoring in the arts to high school students at NFA. The Culinary Arts students at NFA created a luncheon for their guests.

On February 11, these same musicians joined with South Middle School Select Choir, the NFA North Company Chorus, and student-vocalist Eliza Benfer from Bishop Dunn, to put on an extraordinary concert with uplifting music from different genres, poetic and spoken considerations by Gail Carfizzi, and a Color Guard expose from the ROTC. Purple Heart Cookies were baked by the NFA Culinary Arts students for those who attended. This event honored our Veterans and Military Personnel, Civil and Human Rights Advocates, First Responders, Educators, Musicians, Artists, Parents and Family members, the Youth, and those who inspire and nurture the Youth.

Proceeds from this Concert were given to the Castle Point VA Medical Center in honor of our Veterans in connection with the annual National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans week, February 8-14. ArtsLEAF also received a donation for mentoring youth in the arts.

In July, Trestle Inc. organized and held a Blood Drive, honoring our Medical Personnel.

For the tenth commemoration of September 11<sup>th</sup>, a memorial mass given by Trestle Inc. President, Father Bill Scafidi, aboard the River Rose was held to remember the victims and their families of the tragedy at the World Trade Center, never forgetting those who died and suffered, recognizing the heroic efforts of our the First Responders that day and the daily efforts of our Military Personnel since. A beautiful red, white and blue carnation heart was thrown into the Hudson River at West Point. Fr. Bill stressed the importance of remembering the reasons for changes that have been put into place, such as Homeland Security, and teaching our youth the historical significance and implication of this tragedy each year.

We would ask Mrs. Jeanne Paff, escorted by her husband, Fran, to come up to the stand. As they are making their way... Newburgh's September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial sits at the top of Park Place overlooking the Hudson River. Every year, those Firefighters, Police and First Responders, and People working or attending school at or near the World Trade Center that day, and those on the airplanes who died, are remembered with an annual service corresponding to the times of the tragedy. There is a little garden that beautifies this memorial and gives comfort to those who come for a respite. Jeanne has taken time and personal funds to beautify the gardens throughout the year with different artistic displays corresponding with the seasons. We acknowledge her today with proceeds from our Sept. 11 event to continue to artistically render the gardens at this memorial. Fr. Bill and Hazel Yannone will present her with a Certificate of Appreciation as well.

Thank you, Jeanne.

And this year, we added to our annual brick walkway – a Heroes section for those who would like to honor or memorialize a Hero in their lives. We have chosen the section of bricks in front of the first archway, Washington's Headquarters, as an appropriate location, for the Heroes of the past and those who are replicated within as local Heroes. We will offer two choices of brick locations, the regular walkway section or the Heroes section, as part of Trestle Inc's Salute to Our Heroes.

The Zion Lions student basketball athletes, in collaboration with Trestle Inc., are working on creating art panel banners of their heroes, through interviews and research and then artistic renditions. There will be twenty art panel Heroes banners, similar to those on Colden Street, which will hang on street poles in another section of our City.

Heroes are not who you might always think of as a hero; they could be sitting next to you right now. They shape our lives and the lives of our children. They are part of every profession you can imagine and even those you don't. They inspire us everyday to act and to strive for a better community. They are the Heroes Among Us...and we are truly grateful for them, and for you...whom we consider to be Trestle's Heroes, like Marilyn Draxton...

In closing, we typically tease you at this point of the program with upcoming highlights. And so, next year will be Trestle Inc.'s tenth anniversary, and there will be many things in store to delight you. One will be a tenth year commemoration Trestle Inc. ornament as a limited edition treasure. And there will be many treasures throughout the year!!!!!!