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## Westchase Artist's Society Brings Creative Community Together

Westchase Artist's Society celebrates five years in the community this summer

By [Deborah Bostock-Kelley \(/users/deborah-bostock-kelley\)](#) | [Email the author \(#\)](#) | March 22, 2011

Since its inception in 2006, the Westchase Artist's Society has grown from two women with a creative vision to a family of artisans.

"When we started out it was very simple. We'd meet, hang out and do art," said Vanessa Montenegro, who along with Leah Mondino formed the group. "We put out a call to artists and at our first meeting at Starbucks, five people showed up."

Today the group has 20 members and a full calendar of events.

"We have grown to be more active in the community and do more things together as artists," says Montenegro.

Membership is open to all skill levels, from amateur to professional.

"You don't have to be an artist to belong to the group, just be interested in art," said Teresa Trubilla, newly elected president. "We have some people who art is what they do as a profession and others who simply do it as a hobby. We have a wide range of skill levels."

Many members are Westchase residents, but some come from nearby neighborhoods.

"We have learning meetings and activity meetings. We've had several shows at Upper Tampa Bay Library and last spring, we had a show at Ruth Eckerd Hall. We try to do several shows a year," Trubilla said. "In our group, we have such artists as photographers, painters – oil, acrylic, pastel, watercolor, ceramic arts, and we have one member who specializes in beautiful, elaborate paper airplanes. We always welcome new members."

Approximately five members of Westchase Artist's Society will showcase their original artwork in [Arts in the Park](#) ([http://www.carrollwoodcenter.org/upcoming-events.html#ARTS\\_IN\\_THE\\_PARK](http://www.carrollwoodcenter.org/upcoming-events.html#ARTS_IN_THE_PARK)) at Carrollwood Cultural Center on March 26 and 27, in the oak-shade park behind the center.

[Arts in the Park](#) (<http://carrollwood.patch.com/events/arts-in-the-park>) will feature local artists from various mediums including painting, hand-crafted jewelry, mixed media art, computer art, fiber art, and performance art. The Carrollwood Cultural Center Band and the Sounds of Swing will provide the music for the event.

The Westchase Artist's Society's yearly \$25 registration comes with benefits for shows like the Art in the Park event with limited spacing. Members get to post their art and a link to their personal website on the Society's "[Our Artists](#)" (<http://www.westchaseartists.com/wa/artists.htm>) web page. In addition, members get to be part of art critiques and seminars, as well as access to their Google group discussions.

"One benefit of the group is the tremendous camaraderie," said Harvey Berman, a member and water color painter. "I get to see some very talented people and their work that I was not able to prior to being a member."

The next meeting the Westchase Artist's Society is March 22, at the [Westchase Swim and Tennis Center](#) (<http://westchase.patch.com/listings/westchase-swim-tennis-center>) from 6:30-8:30PM where Harvey will do a water color demonstration with the group.

"We are doing a still life, a simple flower arrangement. I'm bringing in paper," Berman said. "We're going to do this together. It should be a fun



the materials - paint and

One thing hasn't changed in their almost five years as an organization: their original purpose.

"We are open to any artist, to anyone interested in exchanging creative ideas," Montenegro said. "We are here for the community to enjoy."

To learn more about the Westchase Artist's Society or to become a member, visit [www.westchaseartists.com/](http://www.westchaseartists.com/).



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