

# A Legacy of art

Friends honor the memory of Royal Nebeker with a scholarship fund for arts education

The night after renowned artist and beloved teacher Royal Nebeker died, a few of his friends gathered at the Shelburne Inn.

"I proposed a toast to Royal," said Dwight Caswell, "which me struck as a little odd because he was a Mormon who didn't drink."

All the same, Caswell, along with Shelburne Inn owners David Campiche and Laurie Anderson, sought to honor a departed friend. An idea struck Caswell and he shared it with the group: a scholarship fund in Nebeker's name. (Full disclosure: Caswell and Campiche are regular contributors to Coast Weekend.)

"Royal was so important to the art community here," said Caswell. Nebeker, whose serene, colorful paintings were shown worldwide, taught at Clatsop Community College for over 35 years.

"He helped put together a world-class program," said Richard Rowland, a ceramics instructor at CCC who worked alongside Nebeker since the 1990s. "He taught the way that he painted. He was able to sort of have this ... intimacy with real contact, both with the students and with his own paintings."

"Royal was such a great teacher, and he was so involved with his students," said Caswell. "We thought he was such a good teacher and had influenced so many people that it would be a fitting memorial to him to have an ongoing scholarship that would go to students

who were interested in the arts, to take art courses."

About a week after Nebeker passed, Caswell proposed the scholarship idea to Nebeker's wife, Sarah, a Clatsop County commissioner.

"I thought it was a fine idea," said Sarah Nebeker. "Anytime students can be assisted with education — especially in the arts — I'm all for it."

That the fund would be for scholarships, as opposed to grants, appealed to Sarah, who noted Royal's rare combination of creative talent and his ability to convey art's workings to others.

"Royal was definitely a fine educator in the arts," she said. "That was very important to him, as well as producing art. He felt a responsibility to build his community and its awareness in the arts and culture, and he did."

With mentions of the scholarship fund in funeral literature and in Nebeker's obituary, donations began trickling in. At press time, Caswell said around 20 people have given almost \$2,000.

"Oddly enough, about three-quarters of the donations came from outside Clatsop County," Caswell said. "Royal had an influence beyond Clatsop County. Most of the money came from the Portland area — people who'd seen his art there, or who had studied with him."

Still, Caswell hopes that \$2,000 is only the beginning. And so, in the same room where the idea was hatched, Caswell, along with Campiche, Anderson, Sarah Nebeker and others,

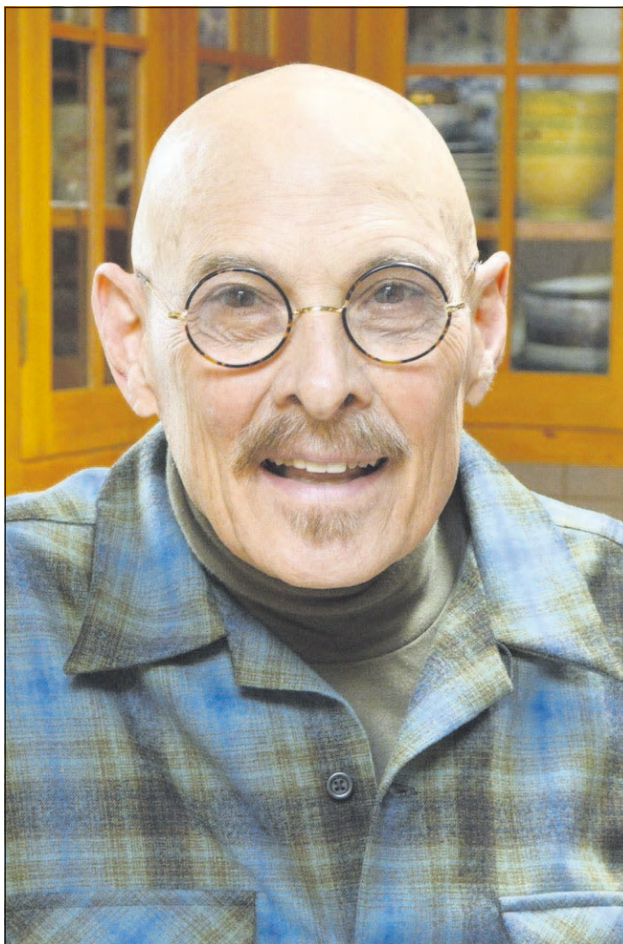


Photo by Dwight Caswell

As a memorial to internationally recognized local artist Royal Nebeker, who died Sept. 6, a local group has created an ongoing scholarship fund to be awarded to students pursuing arts education.

will host the scholarship's inaugural fundraising event.

The first annual Royal Nebeker Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 22, at the Shelburne Inn. For \$50, attendees will be treated to a four-course Italian dinner and wine with all proceeds after cost benefitting the fund. Diners will also be encouraged to bid on donated artworks in both live and silent auctions.

Finding artists to contribute their work, Caswell said, was a breeze.

"Nobody I have asked has paused for more than about a split-second," Caswell said. "Everybody just thinks it's a great idea. We've had a tremendous response."

For Caswell, the fondness for Nebeker within the local arts community has resulted in almost an embarrassment of riches.

"My only problem has been to avoid insulting people by not asking them because there are

so many artists who would like to contribute," Caswell said. "But on the other hand, this is going to happen again."

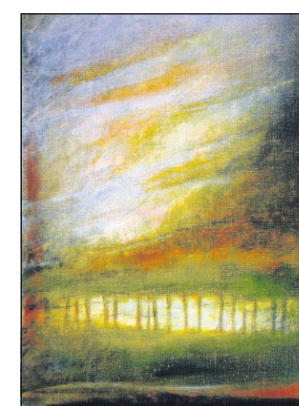
"Our goal is to raise at least \$30,000 eventually," he added. "This is not a one-shot thing. We're going to keep doing this year-in and year-out until we get a substantial amount of money. Basically we're looking to create an endowment."

Though specific terms — like when the scholarship(s) will become available, and how



Submitted photo by Laurie Anderson

The Shelburne Inn in Seaview, Washington, will host the first annual Royal Nebeker Dinner Sunday, Feb. 22 to raise funds for the new Royal Nebeker Scholarship Fund.



Submitted photo

"Time and Again," a donated painting by local artist Rhonda Grudenic, will be auctioned off during the first annual Royal Nebeker Dinner on Feb. 22.

Royal's own beginnings.

"Royal, of course, was a working artist," she said. "He applied for and received grants, and they were helpful. He also received a scholarship in his early years that allowed him to be recognized and encouraged him to keep pursuing art."

## Royal Nebeker Dinner

Sunday, Feb. 22

6 p.m. no-host bar

7 p.m. dinner

8 p.m. live and silent auctions

Shelburne Inn

4415 Pacific Way, Seaview, Wash.

360-642-2442

\$50 for dinner and auction

\$10 for auctions only

Live and silent auctions will feature donated artwork by:

Richard Rowland, Darren Orange, Noel Thomas, Miki'ala Souza, Rhonda Grudenic, Bethany Rowland, Kirsten Horning, David Campiche, Laurie Anderson and Dwight Caswell

# the arts

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Story by ANDREW TONRY