

# BSAC Arts Center Grand Opening Set For September

In just over a year, the Black Swamp Arts Council will have managed to convert a former retail space into a flexible, accessible space dedicated to the arts.

Diane Tinsman, BSAC president, said the group plans a grand opening of the center at 210 North De fiance Street on Saturday,

Sept. 28.

The building, previously the Eliza Henry store, was donated to BSAC by the Edward and Mildred Roth family.

The donation was announced in August 2023.

Since then, Tinsman said most of the work to the building has been cosmetic

in nature, like installing new flooring.

But when it came time to do more major work, such as making the restroom Americans-With-Disabilities-Act accessible and compliant with state building codes, state permits had to be obtained.

Those permits have been

received, and work is underway.

## Flexible

Like many downtown Archbold buildings, the space is basically deep and relatively narrow.

The goal of BSAC in making changes was flexibility.

The walls have been cov-

ered in "slatwall" panels.

The panels have horizontal grooves, or slats, spaced a few inches apart. Special hangers can be added, moved, and removed to display artwork.

Shelves can fit into the slats to display three-dimensional pieces, Tinsman said.

Two moveable dividers, covered with the slatwall panels, can be moved on casters to block off an area at the back for classroom space.

Because the dividers can be moved, the size of the space can be increased or decreased.

Toward the front of the building, will be an area where artwork can be displayed and offered for sale.

"We definitely want to highlight the amazing talent of the local artists. We really have talented professional artists in this area. So we might have it set up as an art show," Tinsman said.

"But we want to have the artwork be for sale.

"We plan on having our holiday art market be an extended holiday art market, probably for the months of November and December, where we have just a wide range of artwork for sale and a chance to meet some of the artists as well.

"I think we'll always have a certain amount of local artwork for sale, even when we have other shows going on."

The space can be for more than just visual arts.

With a small stage at the front of the building, the center can host small concerts,

poetry or other readings, or even presentations about the arts.

## Class Space

The classroom space can be about more than just classes.

There will be classes for children, including after-school programs, and on Saturdays, something tentatively called "Creativity Club" that will be more free time for kids to create," Tinsman said.

"But it's definitely not just for kids.

"We're going to have adult classes, and we want to have a wide variety of art mediums.

"So we might have an adult clay Santa class, and then we might have flower arranging, and we might have poured paints or alcohol ink.

"I'd love to have a time... when people could bring in whatever they're working on, and you know, sit around a table and work together and laugh and connect.

"We're also going to have opportunity for people who want to have an art-themed birthday party. They could choose a project that they want to create, and they would all sort of work on that project.

"They can bring in their own cake and drinks and just have fun."

## Finances

BSAC is a nonprofit organization that is funded (Continued on page 8)



The interior of the new Black Swamp Arts Council Center, in the building that formerly housed Eliza Henry. In the foreground are the service counter and a display case. The walls

are covered with panels that allow artwork to be hung in many different places without having to drive nails into the wall. Art should begin covering the walls soon.—photo by David Pugh

## \*BSAC Arts Center

(Continued from first page) through private donations, grants from private foundations, and the Ohio Arts Council, Tinsman said.

For the Arts Center, Tinsman said a capital campaign, with a budget of \$250,000, was established to cover renovations, furnishing, electronics, arts supplies—“everything it takes to open a new business.”

The campaign is still underway, but more than \$170,000 has been collected toward the \$250,000 goal.

“Black Swamp has been around for 25 years. We’ve been really the primary arts organization and provider of arts opportunities in this area,” she said.

“This is now our next chapter, to have a physical space.

“And I think it highlights for people that Archbold believes the arts are important.”