

The Mayor's Remembrance of Lena Horne

Some of the most frequent comments I receive as Mayor is... "Tell me you are still an artist", or "You haven't stop drawing portraits have you?"

I have been blessed to be able to build a career on a God-given talent that gives me great satisfaction every day, which now includes serving as the Mayor of Manlius!

Since 1982, I have been drawing and presenting portraits to celebrities across New York State commemorating their performances or appearances. The recipients have included: Olivia Newton-John, Joan Rivers, Bob Hope, Whitney Houston, Bruce Springsteen, Phil Collins, James Taylor, Liberace, Kenny



Rogers, Loretta Lynn, Johnny Cash, Reba McEntire, Gerald Ford, President and Mrs. George H. Bush, Elizabeth Dole, Abigail Van Buren, Bill Cosby, Natalie Cole, Jeff Foxworthy, John Landry, Roger Staubach, Fred Couples, Phil Mickelson as well as Carmello Anthony and Gerry McNamara just to name a few.

But among the very first celebrity portraits was to Lena Horne.

In 1984, Ms. Horne appeared in her one woman Broadway show at the Landmark Theatre. Rose Bernthal was the Executive Director and helped arrange the portrait presentation during a press conference. Ms. Horne was thrilled with the portrait and invited me as her guest to the show. She also asked me backstage so she could "show-off" the artist who did such a good job!

Her beauty, talent and smile were dazzling... Only to be out shown by the generous spirit extended to a young 27 year-old artist and a special memory I will always cherish.