

Iowa Arts Council,
Capitol Complex,
Des Moines, Iowa 50319
515/281-4451

Vol. 1, number 2
(1988)

ARTalk

**This is the first edition of
ARTalk for Expansion Arts
Programs, Kathleen B. Hill,
Editor.**

Welcome to the Expansion Arts Programs edition of ARTalk, a publication created to inform you of special items of interest to individuals interested in programs for special constituents and community and rural programs. In addition, it will also provide a forum for the exchange of information.

I invite you to contribute articles, reviews and editorials about issues pertaining to expansion arts, and thoughts and observations of importance to you. Keep the length of contributing articles to a minimum--between 50 to 200 words. Send your contributions to me, Kathleen Hill, c/o Iowa Arts Council.

Because ARTalk space and time is limited, I reserve the right to select and edit all materials submitted. No material will be returned to contributors.

In October, I began as director of Expansion Arts, a newly created position with the Iowa Arts Council. In this position, I work with the Special Constituents program, Arts to Share, and the Touring Arts Team. I also oversee the Special Constituents and Solo Artists artist roster to assess if it meets the needs of the populations they serve. In addition, I serve as the "504" coordinator, and as a clearinghouse for information regarding the above programs.

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The Expansion Arts program of the Iowa Arts Council was created to provide special assistance and service to groups and individuals who have been traditionally unserved or underserved in the field of the arts. In order to facilitate the integration of these groups into the mainstream of arts activities, the Iowa Arts Council has three programs that address the needs of special audiences and participants in the arts.

SPECIAL CONSTITUENTS

One of these programs is the Special Constituents Program, designed to bring arts programs to special audiences. These groups include, but are not limited to: the elderly; physically, mentally and emotionally disabled; incarcerated; ethnic minorities; low-incomed; geographically isolated; and institutionalized. To date during fiscal year 1988, there have been a total of 56 grants awarded through the Special Constituents Program, with 38 individual artists participating.

Programs vary in length (2 hours to 1 year) and frequency (daily, monthly, etc). As coordinator of this program, I help sponsoring organizations locate an approved artist and assist both sponsor and artist in designing an appropriate program for their client's needs. The Iowa Arts Council awards grant funds for up to one-half the artist's fees and art supply costs.

During the past fiscal year, there have been a variety of art activities in the Special Constituents program. For example, last July **Dennis Adams** helped the residents of the Children's Habilitation Center create a mural called "The Dream Project." Adams was the primary designer of the painting, which takes up a wall of the recreation room at the center in Johnston.

Approximately 50 children, ages 4 through 20, helped plan and paint the mural, which includes handprints of some of the children.

Program goals were reached by communicating to each child, through the creative art process, the importance of his/her individual part in the work as well as the importance of that part to the overall project. Adams said it best when he stated, "The mural belongs to the residents."

Recently, artist **Janice Baker Haines** visited two meal sites for the elderly for a pilot music program--one in Pleasantville and one in Knoxville. Participants from age 60 to 80 took part in the music and dance and enjoyed it so much that they plan on continuing the program at Pleasantville. Knoxville, on the other hand, wants to try a theatre program next. Over 100 elderly persons benefited from the two one-hour sessions.

Last February, the **Warriors of the Mystic Word** performed for confined delinquent youth at the Iowa State Training School in Eldora. Over 250 youth and staff members watched the six troupe member's collection of North American dances, songs, and stories and fables. The audience was caught up in the art of storytelling about how the world was created, why the crawfish walk backwards, how fire was discovered, and other tales of the North American culture.

ARTS TO SHARE

The Arts to Share program (formerly called the Solo Artists program) is one of the Iowa Arts Council's most popular programs because of its simplicity, minimal paperwork and reasonable costs. To be eligible to apply for a one-day arts activity, organizations need to be nonprofit, tax-exempt.

Sponsors contact the artist directly from a roster of professional artists available from the Iowa Arts Council. The sponsor then works with the artist to plan the activity for a given situation or need.

This July the name of the Solo Artists program was changed to Arts to Share. In the new Arts to Share program sponsoring groups arrange programs that emphasize interaction between the artist and the group so that an exchange of ideas and talents can take place. For example, lectures may be followed by an informal question/answer period and/or a reception at which the artist meets the community on an informal and individual basis. The ideal situation is best realized in small group sessions, which are encouraged whenever feasible.

In the "new" Arts to Share program, it is also important that the coordinator for the sponsoring group talk with the artist before contracts are signed to ensure that the expectations of the sponsoring group and the artist are understood. The sponsor should provide the artist with information on all aspects of the artist's visit prior to the artist's arrival (road maps and directions to the program site are a good idea).

The Arts to Share program is designed especially to serve new sponsors and serves as an introduction to other programs and services of the Iowa Arts Council.

During fiscal year 1988 Solo Artists program grants were awarded to a wide variety of audiences, in many different artistic disciplines across the state.

For example, many libraries across Iowa brought in an artist

for a one-day performance or workshop. Last February, in celebration of Black Heritage Month, the main library in Des Moines sponsored a Brown Bag Concert featuring jazz musician, **Preston Love**. Audience participation and sharing was evident when a piano accompanist came forth from the audience and another woman sang some songs.

Schools and churches also utilize the Arts to Share program. In April, Northwest Iowa Technical College helped bring theatre artist **Kate Kasten** to entertain during National Secretary's Week in Sheldon. During Presbytery Day, Westminster Presbyterian Church brought **Bonnie Sovern** to Des Moines to demonstrate spinning and weaving to over 50 children in grades two through six.

Local community arts councils and various other groups are eligible to apply for an Arts to Share program grant. The Grinnell Arts Council had writer **Sam Pritchard** work with students last January, and last month, the Iwanago Chapter of the National Campers and Hikers sponsored **Weldon and Gene Gourd** at the state convention at the Prairie Flower Campground in Saylorville. The Gourd brothers provided a variety of sing-along summer fun.

TOURING ARTS TEAM

The Touring Arts Team (TAT), is designed to bring arts activities to small Iowa communities with populations of 1500 or less during the summers. There are three teams which visit five towns each, spending two days in each selected community. The team is composed of six to seven artists who provide workshops during the days and performances in the evenings. Communities help coordinate the tour and provide lodging and food for the artists. Teams

and towns have been selected for this summer's TAT--the 11th summer for the program in Iowa. First leg artists were **Dee Peters** a visual artists from Des Moines, **Timothy Britton** folk musician from Fairfield, **Chris Langille** a visual artist from Malvern, **Valerie Williams** a modern dancer from Ames, **Preston Love** a jazz musician from Omaha, and writer **Theresa Pappas** from Ames. They left Des Moines on June 15 to tour Martensdale, Farmington, Grand Mound, Elkader and Onslow.

The second leg of TAT left Des Moines July 11 and visited Lakewood, Hamburg, Woodbine, Auburn, and Panora. Team members include **Dennis McPartland** and **Tim Daugherty** jazz musicians from Cedar Rapids, **Jody Hovland** a theatre artist from Iowa City, **Kate Carol** a dancer from Iowa City, **Dennis Adams** a visual artist from Bouton, and **Marck Nystrom** a potter from Boone.

The third leg of TAT will leave Des Moines on July 27 and head North to visit Rockwell City, Maurice, Sanburn, Elma, and Thor. Team members were **Teri Breitbach** and **Monica Leo** puppeteers from Iowa City, **Dana White Shaeffer** a weaver and visual artist from Maxwell, **Vernon Windsor** a dancer from Ames, writer **Sam Pritchard** from Ames and watercolorist **Robert Shuler** from Des Moines.

In conjunction with the Governor's Conference on Aging, the first Elder Arts Festival was held May 18-19 at the Des Moines Convention Center. The theme of the conference was "Take Pride in Iowa's Elders." That pride was evident in the accomplishments of Iowa's older population demonstrated at the conference. Seniors age 60 and

older who were residents of Iowa were eligible to enter.

The Governor's Elder Art Festival provided the unique opportunity to showcase the diverse creativity of Iowa's senior citizens. Two-hundred and sixty Iowa elders participated in the arts festival and nearly 300 entries were exhibited in 11 categories, including painting/drawing, photography, sculpture, wood, quilting, needlecraft, fabric weaving, ceramic pottery, leather, scrapcraft, and various assorted crafts.

The judging took place on the morning of May 18 by a panel of distinguished Iowans. Painting/drawing was judged by **Elizabeth Miller**; photography by **Doug Wells**; sculpture, ceramics and pottery by **Peggy Patrick**; wood by **John Leavengood**; quilting by **Mike Wigg**; needlecraft by **Joan Moore**; fabric weaving by **Dana White Schaeffer**; and leather by **Susan Stropes**.

At the Awards Breakfast, winners were presented certificates signed by Governor Branstad. Winners in each category were as follows: first place painting, **Wayne Soderstrum** from Kelly, and honorable mention, **Robert Shuler** from Des Moines; first place photography, **R. C. McQuiston** from Newton, and honorable mention went to **Arthur Allen** from Iowa City; sculpture, first place and honorable mention went to **Wayne Thompson** from Swea City; first place wood and honorable mention, **W. J. Buck** from Des Moines; first place quilting to **The Flying Fingers Quilting Club** of Ackley and honorable mention to **Helen Dickinson** of Ames; first place needlecraft to **Mary Beaumont** and honorable mention to **Alice Perardi** from Fort Madison; first place fabric weaving to **Alwing**

Owenson of Story City and honorable mention to **Marie Molloy** of Des Moines; first place pottery to **Marie Mollow** of Des Moines and **Mary Lou Wheeler** received honorable mention; first place scrapcraft to **Aletha Smith** of Des Moines and honorable mention to **Keitha Doane** of Ames; and assorted crafts first place winner was **Maxelle Goldsmith** of Des Moines and **Helen Soderstrum** of Kelley received honorable mention.

The People's Choice Award, which turned out to be a fun addition to the festival, went to **Lois Gookin** from Chariton for her quilt entitled "Sunburst."

The First Elder Arts Festival was a success and plans are already in progress for next year's arts festival. For more information about the conference, the arts festival and next year's festival plans, contact Lois Haecker, Department of Elder Affairs, 236 Jewett Building, 914 Grand, Des Moines, Iowa, 50319; or call (515) 281-5187.

ACCESSIBILITY

Very Special Arts Iowa has an accessibility committee whose purpose is to encourage, assist, provide, and foster programs that benefit everyone's enjoyment and participation in the arts, without prejudice and regardless of sex, race, creed, national origin, disability, age, or habitat.

The accessibility committee was formed to ensure compliance with legislation enacted by Congress in 1973 that benefits all citizens with disabilities.

Called the Rehabilitation Act (Public Law 93-112), it contains a sentence called section 504 which states: *"No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be*

denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

Section 504 prohibits discrimination against disabled people under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

With the cooperation and partial funding through a grant with the Iowa Arts Council, this goal is accomplished through a site and facilities review. The program's objective is to gather information, review and disseminate it, advise and assist where possible, and foster an awareness of the special needs of performers and patrons of the arts who have disabilities. The purpose of the program is to make the arts accessible to everyone, and to deny no one.

The goals of the Very Special Arts Accessibility Committee are:

1. Encourage optimum physical accessibility of all performing and entertainment facilities.

2. Provide technical assistance and information in regard to compliance with "Section 504" requirements.

3. Encourage programmatic accessibility.

4. Encourage attitudinal change toward a better understanding of people with disabilities.

5. Promote and encourage the employment of people who are disabled to portray character roles that are concerned with an individual disability or a special need (i.e., a blind actor/actress to portray a blind person, etc.)

The accessibility committee has recently completed four first time on-site visits: the Charles H. MacNider Art Museum in Mason City, Iowa; the Sioux City Art Center in Sioux City, Iowa; the Davenport Museum of Art in Davenport, Iowa; and the Lincoln Center for the Cultural Arts in Bettendorf, Iowa.

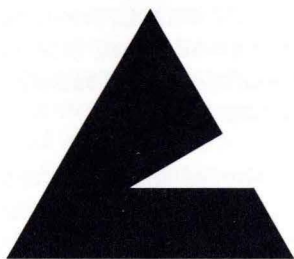
"These four host facilities were extremely accommodating, receptive and sensitive to the purpose of our visit. We're very appreciative of their time and

assistance," said Sue Jensen, director of Very Special Arts Iowa.

"Many general observations, which remain constant from year to year, can be made about commonly shared weaknesses and building types. We note, for example, that newer buildings are usually much more accessible than older buildings, and buildings with fewer levels are more accessible than multi-level buildings. Also noted is the fact that public telephones, drinking fountains, identification signs, parking, and handrails remain a common area of needed improvement."

"We are encouraged, however, by the efforts that have been made to improve wherever possible and by the sincere willingness of all sites to consider other improvements if resources permit," said Jensen.

If you are interested in scheduling a visit to your arts facility contact: Very Special Arts Iowa, Grimes Building, Des Moines, IA 50319; or call (515) 281-3179.



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