

Iowa Arts Council,  
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# ARTalk

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

Welcome to the second edition of ARTalk, a newsletter designed to reach Iowans with news and information about the Special Constituencies Program, the Arts to Share Program, and the Touring Arts Team Program. ARTalk is scheduled to be published at least twice a year and will include information on residencies, any changes in program guidelines or application procedures, and news related to the Expansion Arts Programs of the Iowa Arts Council.

In addition, I continue to invite you to contribute articles, news, and yossur thoughts related to the Expansion Arts Programs. If you have *recent* information you would like to share with others through the ARTalk newsletter, please send your contributions to me. The Iowa Arts Council reserves the right to select and edit all information submitted for publication.

Since the first issue of ARTalk published early last summer, many exciting things have happened. There have been a wide variety of arts activities and numerous artists working in the Expansion Arts Programs all over Iowa...the following is just a sampling.

## SPECIAL CONSTITUENCIES

Arts programs for all Iowans continues to be a priority at the Iowa Arts Council. For example, with grant support through the Special Constituencies Program, the **Muscatine Commission on Aging** is once again offering arts classes for senior citizens in both writing and painting. According to the visual arts instructor, **Zenaida O'Rourke**, the program is so popular with area residents age 60 and over that in **West Liberty** some of the students have been coming to the classes since they were first offered eight

years ago. Approximately fifteen senior citizens attended the classes last fiscal year where several members of the art class received awards for their paintings exhibited at the Muscatine County Fair last August.

The creative writing class is once again being offered for senior citizens in **Muscatine**. The class meets two hours per week and is taught by **Marilyn Jackson**. Goals of the program include instruction in creative writing, providing a social activity for the elderly, generating new and renewed interests in writing, and encouragement in using their new skills on their own. Twenty-six people participated in the program last fiscal year with many returning, along with new students, for continued classes this October.

In addition, **John Schmits'** watercolor class for seniors began September in West Liberty and will also be offered this spring in Muscatine.

The following is an example of creative writing from the spring 1988 class with artist Marilyn Jackson.

### WRITING MEMORIES by Ruby Brei

Our writing class meets once a week  
We Seniors with each other speak  
And share our memories so dear  
We laugh and sometimes shed a tear.  
We write of home and days gone by  
Of baking bread and apple pie  
We write of people that we love  
And some who've already gone above.  
We write of school days in one room  
Of helping teacher sweep with broom  
Of bringing apples for the teacher  
And meetings with a traveling preacher.  
Of dusty roads and fence of rails  
And taking lunch in sirup pails  
"Tag" and "Blackman" at recess  
And how girls always wore a dress.  
We write of carefree days we had  
And days when we were very bad  
Of tricks we played on Halloween  
We didn't think we were so mean.

We write of Mother and of Dad  
Depression Days that were so sad  
New clothes and shoes were very few  
A bushel of corn worth ten cents, too.  
On Saturday nights we bathed by the  
fire  
Old kerosene lamps left much to desire  
Before electricity we did things by hand  
But on Fourth of July we enjoyed the  
band!  
As we remember, those days were good  
But we wouldn't go back to them if we  
could.

**Greg Neuman**, a dancer from **Des Moines**, is providing dance and movement experiences for residentially-placed behaviorally-disordered students in **Mason City**. Called the "Gerard Program", it is sponsored by the **Northern Trails AEA** and the Iowa Arts Council. The program began in September and will continue throughout the school year, meeting one day each week.

Project goals include increasing positive self-esteem, improving body image, gross motor skills and social skills. Thirty-five children, aged 6 to 13, are attending classes. According to Neuman, "We are dancing, growing, and learning...I love the kids!"

At the **Plains Area Mental Health Center** in **Le Mars**, visual artist, **Pat Neubrand**, provided participatory arts activities for people who are socially isolated and mentally ill. According to Community Support Coordinator, **Charles Pope**, although the community has many activities available to the mentally retarded, little was being done for the mentally ill involving the visual arts before Neubrand's class.

Instruction was given in basic techniques of pencil drawing, drawing in color and also in clay. Additional program goals included nurturing individual creativity so that the students learned more about themselves and understand that we are all

creative, developing confidence that all the students could make something worthwhile, learning to think things through to solve visual problems by creating at their own level to their highest potential, and encouraging communication among the participants and the community as they shared their accomplishments in a non-competitive manner.

Both Neubrand and the Plains Mental Health Center are working together toward developing an ongoing program for the mentally ill, encouraging an appreciation of arts through their association with area artists and art patrons of this rural community.

To date in fiscal year 1989, a total of 47 arts programs and activities have received grant support through the Special Constituencies Program.

To be eligible for a grant in the Special Constituencies program, the applicant organization must be located in Iowa, must be a federally tax-exempt nonprofit organization, and serve at least one special constituency. Through this program, the Iowa Arts Council supports arts projects for elderly, people with disabilities, ethnic and minority populations, correctional institutions, county care facilities, community meal sites, and other facilities that serve special populations.

**Funds are allocated on a first-come, first-serve basis and are being expended quickly this fiscal year, so get your application in soon. To find out if your organization qualifies for a grant and for more information about the program, please contact me at 515-281-8352.**

The Arts to Share Program is very popular and well-utilized by small-budgeted organizations in Iowa. During the first two

## ARTS TO SHARE

quarters of fiscal year 1989, a total of 93 grants have been awarded through this program to schools, libraries, chamber of commerces, local arts councils, churches and other nonprofits.

For example, the **Janesville Public Library**, with support from the Iowa Arts Council, once again offered a summer reading program in Bremer County libraries called "Eyes on Iowa." This last August artist, **Gayle Hartwig**, shared "Songs from an Iowa Front Porch" including one of her own creation. She shared the neighborliness of an Iowa front porch, the rhythm of the music, the folk tales behind some of the songs, and some information about her guitar. The turnout was great and the children were delighted by the performance. They now know that Iowa has songs of her own--and people to sing them!

In September, the **Grundy County Conservation Board** offered four 1-hour sessions of folk and ethnic music and dance by artist **Ross Sutter**. All of this was part of the 9th Annual Pioneer Craft Fair at Grundy County Museum in **Morrison**. Participants had the opportunity to try various folk musical instruments and received instruction in folk dances. A performance by children on musical toys was also included prior to the residency. The overall goal of instilling a better appreciation and knowledge of folk/ethnic music was achieved. Project director, **Sam Gooden**, reported that over 1,500 people took part in the festivities.

The **Spencer Area Arts Council**, with partial funding through the Iowa Arts Council's Arts to Share Program, sponsored a writing residency with the writing duo of **Lee Hadley** and **Annabelle Irwin**, native Iowans known to their readers as "Hadley Irwin." The duo was brought to Spencer to give seventh and eighth grade students an opportunity to learn

more about the writing process. It was the duo's goal to instill in the students an enthusiasm for both writing and reading.

Hadley Irwin were very well received and presented a workshop that covered almost everything--from getting an idea for a story and the numerous rewrites that eventually result in the "final" product, to the problems and pitfalls associated with getting a story published. Hadley Irwin were warm, funny, entertaining, and above all, educational. Students who were not avid readers are now checking books out of the school library, teachers report.

**Grants to eligible organizations through the Arts to Share Program were awarded on first-come, first-serve basis. Due to the popularity and increased usage of the Arts to Share program this year, the allocated funds have been completely spent for this fiscal year. Matching funds will again be available for Arts to Share Programs July 1, 1989. For more information and to see if your organization is eligible for an Arts to Share Program grant, contact me at 515-281-8352.**

#### TOURING ARTS TEAM

Last summer's Touring Art Team was a huge success! Each of the three teams travelled to five small Iowa communities with populations of 1,500 or less to offer workshops during the day and performances in the evening.

Family fun and excitement are top priorities as Iowa's top professional artists take their talent on tour each summer as Iowa's Touring Arts Team. Plans are now being made for Touring Arts Team 1989. This year, Iowa communities with populations of 2,000 or less are eligible to apply to host a team of artists. The community applications should be going out this February and due back in the Iowa Arts Council's office **April 1st**. Artists'

applications to serve on the team will be available in January and due back in the Iowa Arts Council office **March 1st**.

The dates for summer 1989 Touring Arts Team are:

**1st leg: July 10-July 20**  
**2nd leg: July 24-Aug. 3**  
**3rd leg: Aug. 7-Aug. 17**

For more information and application materials to host the Touring Arts Team, please contact me at 515-281-8352.

#### OLDER AMERICANS

The Iowa Arts Council's Special Constituencies Program places a priority on arts for older Americans, but who are these folks? According to the **American Association for Retired Persons**, the older population--persons 65 years or older--numbered 29.2 million in 1986. They represented 12.1 percent of the U.S. population, about one in every eight Americans. Iowa has one of the highest percentages of elderly--about 14.5 percent.

Older adults today are retiring earlier, living longer, are better educated, healthier and more active. They no more fit a stereotype than members of other groups of people. They come from all strata of society, and most lead active lives. The majority of older persons are concerned with and involved in their communities--in schools, businesses, community centers, religious institutions, and other organizations.

Personal growth and development are dynamic processes that do not end at any particular age. Age brings with it the potential of attaining an enriched emotional, spiritual, and intellectual well-being. For many, old age is the time when a lifetime's accumulation of learning and experience is shared with others. For others, it's a time to take up new hobbies, renew old interests, or perhaps

attend the next art class offered through the local community center or senior citizen center (with a professional artist and partial funding through the Iowa Arts Council of course!).

#### ELDER ARTS FEST

According to **Paula Terry**, Special Constituencies Coordinator at **The National Endowment for the Arts** in Washington D.C., "The arts--visual, performing, literary, media and design--should be an integral part of everyone's life, regardless of age!"

The **Elder Arts Festival** plans are under way. The 2nd annual festival will be held at the Des Moines Convention Center in conjunction with the Governor's Conference on Aging. Dates for this year's arts festival are **May 17-18, 1989**. Iowa artists, age 60 or over, are invited to enter their recent original art work. For more information about the conference and the festival, contact **Lois Haecker**, Department of Elder Affairs, 236 Jewett Building, 914 Grand, Des Moines, Iowa, 50309; or call 515-281-5187.

#### VERY SPECIAL ARTS IOWA

**Very Special Arts Iowa**, The Iowa Arts Council and **Pilot Club** sponsored the annual Governor's Very Special Arts Conference on Friday, September 30th at the new State Historical Building. One hundred and five arts educators, administrators and business persons attended.

The conference featured artist **Gwynne Burke**, along with 65 integrated students from **Mann Elementary School** in Des Moines. They performed three numbers from the Art for Children project "Hollywood Tonight." Earlier in the month, these students had created their own puppets and performed the show with the entire student body of 250 children participating.

An Iowa Arts Council Artspeak was held during the conference to hear comments from people

with disabilities or those who are working in the arts with people who have disabilities. One artist stated, "I am pleased with the programs the Iowa Arts Council is helping provide for people with disabilities." Ideas were discussed for ways in which community organizations, schools, groups, Very Special Arts Iowa and the Iowa Arts Council could work together to provide funds for arts projects.

According to **Sue Jensen**, Executive Director of Very Special Arts Iowa, perhaps the highlight of the day was when keynote speaker **Greg Robinson**, Consultant for Mental Disabilities from the Bureau of Special Education, addressed the topic of art *with* people, rather than *for* people, with disabilities.

Very Special Arts Iowa is a nonprofit organization that provides arts experiences for over 20,000 Iowans with disabilities through festivals, in-service workshops, teachers and students hands-on art activities, dance and creative

movement programs and visual arts activities.

In addition, Very Special Arts Iowa's Accessibility Team plans physical access tours of arts facilities. Jensen states "that the performing arts facilities in Iowa are becoming more aware of the needs of Iowans with disabilities and are more than willing to consider necessary changes to comply with the Section 504 code." For more information about their programs and to schedule a 504 accessibility site visit of your facility, call 515-281-3179.

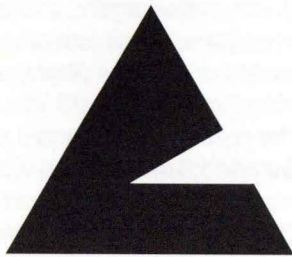
### BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Anytime of the year is an appropriate time to celebrate our cultural background and heritage, but traditionally February is recognized as Black History Month, and now is the time to start planning your Black History events. Although **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s** birthday is in January, many communities celebrate in February with poetry and writing contests, soul food festivals, readings or lectures, slide presentations,

showing of the movie "Roots", art displays by local Black artists, brown bag jazz during the lunch hour, etc. Contact your local arts council, school, or library to help plan your Black History celebration.

### THE ARTS CONNECTION

Mark your calendar! The Arts Connection will be held at the new State Historical Building in Des Moines on **Saturday, April 22, 1989**. The goal of the Arts Connection is to provide a forum for *artists and sponsors* to communicate regarding the Artists-in-Schools/ Communities, Arts to Share and Special Constituencies Programs. During the day, there will also be workshops, speakers, and opportunities to observe and talk with artists about their residency activities. For more information, please call Kay Swan, Director of Arts Education, at 515-281-4100, or myself at 515-281-8352.



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