

Feb. 9, 2009

News Release

For Immediate Release

The Missouri Arts Council will present its 2009 Creative Community Award to the City of Springfield and the Springfield Regional Arts Council at 2 p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 11, in the Capitol Rotunda in Jefferson City.

Mayor Pro Tem Gary Deaver and Zone 2 Councilwoman Cindy Rushefsky, whose zone includes the Creamery Arts Center, will accept the award on behalf of Springfield.

They will join a group of Springfield area arts supporters and art students from Missouri State University who will travel by bus to Jefferson City for the awards ceremony and a luncheon the SRAC arranged for Springfield's legislators, all in conjunction with the Missouri Arts Council's annual advocacy day for the arts.

The annual Missouri Arts Awards are given to honor individuals and institutions in Missouri that have made "profound and lasting contributions" to the state's cultural and artistic landscape. A statewide panel with expertise in various arts disciplines reviews the nominations to assist the Missouri Arts Council in selecting the award winners.

The application submitted by the Springfield Regional Arts Council cited the wide variety of public events, including a number of annual festivals to celebrate the arts, the collaboration of public and private entities across the city to sponsor and produce arts-related activities, and the increase in the number of new venues for live and theatrical performing arts in Springfield.

Some of the specific examples cited in the application include:

- * The longevity of community festivals such as Artsfest in its 29th year and the First Night New Year's Eve celebration, which just completed its 18th year.
- * The Artrain USA traveling exhibition, which broke nationwide daily and full-run attendance records during its visit to Commercial Street last year.
- * The cultural diversity of arts opportunities including the annual Japanese Fall Festival and spring Kite Festival at the Mizumoto Stroll Garden at Nathanael Greene Park and the annual ArtsFiesta! celebrating Hispanic culture at Founders Park in May.
- * Public art programs such as St. John's Health System's commitment to purchasing and exhibiting local and regional original art in its hospital and physicians' office settings.

* The First Friday Artwalk each month, which has grown over 12 years to now include 27 galleries that host an average of 5,000 visitors during each monthly event.

For more information, contact: Sandra CH Smith, Executive Director of the Springfield Regional Arts Council, 862-2787 (ARTS); or Louise Whall, Director of Public Information, 864-1010.