A message from Executive Director Greta Murray . . .

After 33 years at the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, I will be retiring at the end of June. This has been a very rewarding, interesting, sometimes challenging and more often exciting experience. I have met and become enriched by so many dedicated volunteers, talented artists and tireless arts advocates that keep their organizations running on very limited budgets, most without any paid staff. It’s been wonderful to be a part of the growth and development of the arts in our region. I am looking forward to starting a new phase of my life. It’s time for me to make the change from arts administrator to art creator.

When I started working as the Administrative Assistant at the Southwest Minnesota Arts & Humanities Council in June of 1984, the organization was ten years old. SMAHC had just changed from being a grantor and a presenting organization to focusing almost entirely on granting. It was before computers, internet and cell phones. SMAHC didn’t have its own copier or phone intercom system. We used typewriters and carbon copies and grant applications had to be copied off-site and mailed to grant panelists. Today we don’t even own a typewriter and all of our grants are submitted and reviewed on-line. Continued on page 4

Find your artistic inspiration this spring at SMAC’s 2017 Artist Retreat

Join artists from across Southwest Minnesota on May 5 & 6 for SMAC’s annual Artist Retreat, a day and a half of arts inspiration and networking held at Danebod Folk School in Tyler, MN.

The retreat offers afternoon workshops on Friday and a full day on Saturday. You may choose to attend just Friday, just Saturday, or join us for the entire event along with overnight lodging at the historic Danebod Folk School.

Workshop sessions have been created to appeal to artists of all disciplines. You’ll be able to customize your retreat by choosing from two or three options for each session. Continued on page 4

SMAC Scholarships available to attend Rural Arts & Culture Summit in June:

Register Now!

The Rural Arts and Culture Summit will be June 6-8 at the University of Minnesota in Morris. Organized by Springboard for the Arts and the Center for Small Towns, the Summit gathers rural artists, arts organizations and community leaders to highlight arts-based strategies to rural community and economic development. Visit the Summit website at www.ruralartsandculturesummit.com/ to learn more about presenters and sessions. Continued on page 4
UPCOMING SMAC GRANT & NOMINATIONS DEADLINES

SMAC grants must be applied for online. Go to www.swmnarts.org for program guidelines, application tutorial, and the link to the online grant system.

April 1, 2017:
Monthly Grants: Arts Organization Development, Art Legacy Project Planning, & Arts Org Start Up*

April 15, 2017
2017 Prairie Disciple Award Nomination, see more details on page 4.

*Earliest project start date for monthly deadlines is the 1st of the following month.

The "SMAC Grant Process" Series, Part 3

Last time, we explained the fourth through sixth steps of the grant process, including filling out an application, submitting it, and its intake review by SMAC staff. Here’s what happens next:

7. Grant Panel Review Process. Grant applications are reviewed by a panel of at least six volunteers.* These volunteer panelists are artists, arts administrators or volunteers, and arts appreciators representing multiple artistic disciplines from throughout the SMAC geographic region.

For each grant program, SMAC staff contacts a set of appropriately knowledgeable panelists to review the applications received. After recusing themselves from those applications that would be conflicts of interest for them, the panelists log in to SMAC’s online grant system to review the grant applications. Then they individually score every application on each of the criteria for that grant program.

For example, an Art Project grant would be rated on these four criteria (which are outlined for the applicant when applying):

- the artistic quality and merit of the project and the artists involved (50% of total score)
- the impact the project will have on the participants and audience (30% of total score)
- the ability of the applicant to accomplish the project, (14% of total score)
- the plan for evaluating the outcomes of their project (6% of total score)

Scores are based on the following scale: Exceptional, Strong, Moderate, Weak, Poor, Fail.

After the panelists have scored the applications on their own, they meet together, either in person at the SMAC office or by phone conference, to discuss the grant applications. They are allowed to change their scores during the discussion. SMAC staff members are present to facilitate the meeting and take notes during the discussion, but they do not score the applications or take part in any way, other than to make sure the discussion stays focused on the criteria.

The panelists’ final scores are averaged together into an overall score for each application. Applications must receive at least a Moderate (50%) score for each of the criteria and overall in order to move on to the next step, approval for funding by the SMAC Board.

Come back next month to learn about the next step: Funding Approval by the SMAC Board!

*SMAC is always looking for more qualified panelists to aid in grant reviews. Serving on a SMAC panel is an informative way to understand the grant process; individuals who have applied in the past, or are planning on applying in the future, are encouraged to apply to become a panelist. To learn more, please visit: http://swmnarts.org/about/become-a-grant-panelist/.

Memberships & Donations Received
February 18 2017 – March 23 2017
John Tanquist, Appleton • Pearl Ziegenhagen, Clements • Lois Haak, Echo • YME Friends of Music, Granite Falls • Kate Aydin, Hendricks • Hutchinson Theatre Company, Hutchinson • RiverSong Music Festival, Hutchinson • Jackson Federal Savings & Loan Association, Jackson • KLQP-FM (Lac qui Parle Broadcasting Co.), Madison • John & Leanna Ginocchio, Marshall • Colette Powers, Montevideo • Dr. William & Mary Ann Yseth, Pipestone • A. Eric Anderson, Spicer • Wesley & Joan Bakker, Westbrook • Willmar Area Arts Council, Willmar • George & Dody Davies, Willmar • Nancy & Gary Geiger, Willmar • John & Karin Gilbertson, Willmar • Ellen & David Copperud, Worthington • Margaret Hurlibut Vosburgh, Worthington
SW MN Arts Council awards $13,007 to area schools

ARTS IN THE SCHOOLS GRANTS: Grants to schools for artist residencies or arts-related field trips that include educator training and community involvement. Up to $2000 (field trips), or $4,000 (residencies). No cash match required.

**ECHO Charter School**, Echo, $1,448 for a field trip to the Minneapolis Institute of Art for a tour and to see the musical production of *Wicked* at the Orpheum Theatre. [www.echo.charter.k12.mn.us/](http://www.echo.charter.k12.mn.us/)

**Lester Prairie Public School**, Lester Prairie, $4,000 for COMPAS artist Kelley Meister to conduct the residency “Envisioning Creativity through Media Arts”, which will let 6th and 8th grade students connect with community members by interviewing and photographing them about how they use creativity in their daily lives, and how it helps them solve problems. The students will then work to create a slideshow of the images and short videos to be aired for the community and available for student participants. [www.lp.k12.mn.us/](http://www.lp.k12.mn.us/)

**Marshall Public Schools**, Marshall, $3,900 for an artist residency with Saara Raappana, of Motionpoems, to teach 7th graders the principles of creating a motionpoem, which is a short film that uses a poem as the script. Students will work in pairs to make their own motionpoem based on a poem of their choice, letting them develop a deeper understanding of the craft and meaning of poetry. [www.marshall.k12.mn.us/](http://www.marshall.k12.mn.us/)

**Red Rock Central ISD 2884**, Lamberton, $3,659 for their 43rd Annual Lamberton Jazz Festival, which is a day-long festival focusing on Jazz education. It is open to junior high and high school jazz bands. Throughout the day festival clinicians will listen to performances from, and then work with, the participating bands. The day also includes an hour long master class for individual sections of the jazz band and is culminated with a performance by the clinicians. [www.redrockcentral.org/](http://www.redrockcentral.org/)

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SMAC to host financial sustainability & operating support workshop

SW MN Arts Council is hosting a free workshop on financial sustainability and our Operating Support grant program on Thursday, April 27, 2017, from 5:30 to 8:30 pm, at the Marshall-Lyon County Library in Marshall, MN.

Current Operating Support grantees are strongly encouraged to attend, as well as organizations who are hoping to apply for an Operating Support grant for the first time next fall. However, the workshop is open to all arts organizations in the SMAC region.

Phil Hatlie of Nonprofits Assistance Fund will start off the evening with a training session called “More Than Reserves”, which will look at:

- What is the role of capital?
- How can an organization plan for reserves?
- Learn how much and what type of capitalization your organization needs.
- Discuss the signs of under-capitalization.
- Leave with more clarity on the next steps.

Then, SMAC staff will give an overview of what to expect for the Operating Support grant program for Fall 2017, including changes from the previous application process.

Finally, there will be a short time for organizations to start connecting with each other about best practices regarding shared issues. There will also be the opportunity for organizations to sign up for budgeting assistance with SMAC staff.

Supper will be available when attendees arrive – come a little early to fill your plate before the workshop begins. SMAC will also provide mileage reimbursement. Although the workshop is free, attendees are required to register by April 21, 2017. Go to [www.swmnarts.org](http://www.swmnarts.org) to register.
Message from Executive Director, continued

In 1998 I was hired as the Executive Director. From 1974 until 2002, SMAHC rented office space at SMSU. In 2012 we moved to our current space in downtown Marshall and expanded our gallery and meeting space. In 2013, SMAHC changed its name to the Southwest Minnesota Arts Council (SMAC). In 1990 SMAC awarded 71 grants totaling $81,686, which is $351,239 in 2017 dollars. In 2016, SMAC awarded 146 grants totaling $502,957!

I am leaving SMAC in the hands of a strong board of directors and very capable staff. I will not lose my passion for SMAC’s mission and the amazing arts activities that happen throughout our region. It has been an honor to be a part of the SW Minnesota Arts Council and the activities it supports. SMAC has a rich history and I have no doubt that it will continue to be a major force for the arts well into the future.

SMAC seeks applications for Executive Director starting April 1

If you or someone you know is interested in applying to be the new Executive Director for the SW MN Arts Council, a full job description, requirements, and application submission instructions will be available on the SMAC website at www.swmnarts.org beginning April 1, 2017. The deadline to apply is May 1, 2017.

Artist Retreat continued

Here are some of the opportunities and activities planned for the weekend:

- Heart of the Beast Theatre performance
- Intro to Shakespeare (The Guthrie Theatre)
- “Slay!” Intro to Musical Theatre (The Guthrie Theatre)
- Songwriting on the Prairie (Charlie Roth)
- Charlie Roth performance
- Native Arts (Super Labatte)
- Bookmaking Arts (Tamara Isfeld)
- Do you Haiku (Saara Raappana & Lauren Carlson)
- Alcohol Inks on Tile (Melanie Gatchell)
- The Loft Literary Center Session

More sessions and activities are still being added. A full schedule with workshop descriptions, presenters, and other details will be posted online as it is confirmed.

Registration options:

- Friday afternoon only (workshops & meals): $15
- Saturday only (workshops & meals): $15
- Friday & Saturday workshops and meals: $25
- Friday & Saturday workshops, meals, and Friday night lodging: $40

Registration will be up on www.swmnarts.org near the beginning of April! You may also call our office to register by May 1, 2017.

Rural Arts and Culture Summit continued

Early bird registration rates are available through April 19. A SMAC grant to attend the Summit is available, with a simple application form on the SMAC website, www.swmnarts.org. The SMAC grant will reimburse organizations or individuals for:

- The early bird registration fee
- A $100/day stipend for participants who have to take time off work to attend
- Mileage at $.535/mile (carpooling is strongly encouraged to allow as many people to participate)
- Up to $75 per night for lodging

Awards will be made on a first come, first served basis, so get your application in early. Funding is made possible by the voters of Minnesota thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.
Minneapolis State Arts Board
Information Sessions in SMAC region

Would you like to learn more about accessing arts funding through the MN State Arts Board? Several information sessions and individual meetings in the SMAC region will be taking place in April. MN State Arts Board program officer Rina Rossi will talk about the process of applying to Arts Board grant programs for artists, health and human service organizations, schools, local units of government, community organizations, arts organizations, and informal groups. SMAC staff will also be on hand to speak about grant opportunities in some locations.

Advance registration is required. All meetings are free and open to the public. To register, visit: http://swmnarts.org/grants/arts-board-information-sessions-in-smac-region/

Individual 30 minute appointments with a program officer may also still be available. Appointments are a great time to talk with a program officer about your project ideas or to review a past application. See dates below, and register for individual appointments by calling or emailing program officer Rina Rossi at (651) 215-1612, Toll free (800) 866-2787, MN Relay 7-1-1, or rina.rossi@arts.state.mn.us

Marshall*
Wednesday, April 5, 2017, Group Session 1 – 2:30 p.m.
Marshall-Lyon County Library
201 C St, Marshall, MN 56258

Worthington*
Thursday, April 6, 2017, Group Session 4 -5:30 p.m.
Worthington Memorial Auditorium
714 13th Street, Worthington, MN, 56187

Hutchinson*
Tuesday, April 11, 2017, Group Session 5:30-7 p.m.
Hutchinson Center for the Arts
15 Franklin Street SW, Hutchinson, MN, 55350

Willmar*
Wednesday, April 12, 2017, Group Session 6 -7:30 p.m.
Willmar Community Center, Burlington Northern Room,
624 Highway 71 North, Willmar, MN 56201

Additional locations and dates of individual sessions:
Pipestone: April 6  Worthington: April 7
Milan: April 13

*Individual appointments also available this day if they have not filled yet. Registration required.

Other Arts Opportunities

Visit our website at swmnarts.org/category/opportunities/ to learn more about these topics:

- Minnesota State Arts Board free webinar sessions on grant information
- Minnesota State Arts Board Arts Grants: Artist Initiative (deadlines in May and August), Arts Access (deadline April 21), and Folk & Traditional Arts (deadline June 2).
- Entry for “Artists of Minnesota” Spring Show in Duluth (deadline April 29).
- Canby Arts Council seeks artists for Sidewalk Gallery during Hat Daze, June 16-18.
- Kultivera + The Soap Factory Exchange Open Call (Sweden Residency for MN Artists, deadline May 3).
- Carleton College seeks Director/ Curator for the Perlman Teaching Museum (deadline April 30).

SMAC seeks Prairie Disciple Award nominations

The Southwest Minnesota Arts Council is seeking nominations of arts advocates from the SW Minnesota region for its 2017 Prairie Disciple award. Last year SMAC was only accepting nominations for educators, but this year any arts supporter may be nominated.

The Prairie Disciple award recognizes an individual whose activities and involvement have substantially contributed to the arts in southwest Minnesota. These activities may have taken place in just the last couple of years or be a lifetime of contribution.

Nomination instructions and forms are available on the SW MN Arts Council website at swmnarts.org/ under the “Grants” tab, it will be listed under “Special Awards”. Once you click on the Prairie Disciple Award link, you will also be able to see a list of past winners.

The nomination deadline is April 15.

2016 recipient Brian Pearson performing during his acceptance of the award.
**“Friends of SMAC” Update**

In March Shakespeare from “Friends of SMAC” went to the Dassel History Center and Ergot Museum to see *Singing for the Cows: Homesteading a Dream*. The show was brought there by the Dassel-Cokato Arts Association, with help from a SMAC art project grant that they were awarded in late February of this year.

*Singing for the Cows* is a one-woman show that compiles stories from four generations of an American farm family, including over 20 characters and 13 songs, accompanied by period photographs.

*Look for another “Friends of SMAC” highlight next month!*

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**MN Arts Advocacy Day 2017 & Creative MN Study**

Arts Advocacy Day was February 28th and it was the biggest turnout of arts supporters and advocates yet. Over 1,000 arts advocates joined together at the State Capitol to talk to their legislators about the importance of arts to our lives, communities, and economy. The representatives coming from the SMAC region were at an all-time high as well! **Thank you to all the art supporters and legislators that made Arts Advocacy day 2017 a success!**

This year, Minnesota Citizens for the Arts also unveiled the **2017 Creative MN Study**. This study found that the annual economic impact of artists and nonprofit arts and culture organizations in the SMAC Region is nearly **$20 million**!

There is a separate report for each of Minnesota’s 11 regions, as well as one for the entire state. It is full of information, such as:

- Creative jobs, demographics, spending and income, genres.
- What do artists give to communities and what do they need to succeed?
- Public opinion polling of Minnesotans about the arts.
- Update of economic impact study of Minnesota’s nonprofit arts and culture organizations.

To find out more about the study and how it came together, as well as more about the economic impact of the arts in our SMAC region, visit [creativemn.org](http://creativemn.org).

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**Looking for more area arts events on the calendar and the galleries listings?**

There are so many worthwhile art programs and events in our area (which is wonderful!), but we need to monitor our printing costs, so this month we are only listing SMAC and SMAC funded events in the print version of the newsletter. We still keep an extensive calendar of all area arts events and galleries on our website, so please check regularly! Visit [www.swmnarts.org/](http://www.swmnarts.org/), find and click on the green box in the lower right side that says “On the Calendar” or below that, “View Area Galleries” link.

Remember to please continue to send information about your arts events (including posters or flyers), as we will continue to publish them online and post them in the entryway of our office. Email info@swmnarts.org, call the office at 800-622-5284, or mail to: SW MN Arts Council, PO Box 55, Marshall MN, 56258.

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**APRIL SMAC EVENTS**

Events listed here are funded in part with a grant from SMAC with funds provided by the McKnight Foundation, the voters of Minnesota thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund, or by an appropriation from the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the State’s general fund.

- **April 1, SMAC Grant Application Deadline: Arts Organization Development, Legacy Project Planning, and Arts Organization Start-Up**, Applications due by 4:30 pm.

- **April 1, SMAC Grant Review Panel: Art Project and Art Legacy Projects, Round III**, 9 am, SMAC office, 114 N 3rd St, Marshall.

- **April 5, Minnesota State Arts Board Information Session**, 1-2:30 pm, Marshall Lyon County Library, 201 C St, Marshall. Are you interested in learning more about arts funding on a state level? Join SMAC and the
Minnesota State Arts Board for an informational session. Registration is required, see details on page 5.

April 6, Minnesota State Arts Board Information Session, 4-5:30 pm, Worthington Memorial Auditorium, 714 13th St, Worthington. Registration is required, see details on page 5.

April 9, American’s Roots of Pop Concert, 4 pm, Schwans Community Center for Performing Arts, 400 Tiger Dr, Marshall. Marshall Area Fine Arts Council brings Dave Bennett to Marshall, MN. A multi-instrument phenomenon, Dave Bennett is a clarinet virtuoso who also plays electric guitar, piano, drums and sings! He covers music from the Swing Era to early Rock-n-Roll and Country, to Elvis Presley and the Beatles...and maybe a little more! 507-532-5463, mafac.arts@gmail.com, www.mafac.net

April 11, Minnesota State Arts Board Information Session, 5:30-7 pm, Hutchinson Center for the Arts, 15 Franklin St SW, Hutchinson. Registration is required, see details on page 5.

April 12, Minnesota State Arts Board Information Session, 6-7:30 pm, Willmar Community Center, Burlington Northern Room, 624 Highway 71 N, Willmar. Registration is required, see details on page 5.

April 15, SMAC Grant Review Panel: Art Study Opportunity for Youth, 9 am, SMAC office, 114 N 3rd St, Marshall.

April 17, A Night with Phoenix, 6 pm, Hutchinson Senior High School, 1200 Roberts Rd SW, Hutchinson. Performances by Phoenix Drumline, Phoenix Concert Percussion, and Phoenix Plyers. Crda.phoenixdrumline@gmail.com, 320-455-2552, www.phoenixdrumline.org

April 20, SMAC Gallery Artist Reception with Saara Myrene Raappana and Rebekah Wilkins-Pepiton: A Story of America Goes Walking, 7-8 pm, Southwest Minnesota Arts Council, 114 N 3rd St, Marshall. Join us to listen to the poetry of Saara Myrene Raappana and meet with the visual artist Rebekah Wilkins-Pepiton. Both artists are featured in the SMAC gallery until April 28. info@swmnarts.org, 800-622-5284, swmnarts.org

April 21 & 23, Crow River Singers Concert, 7 pm on April 21, New Journey UCC, 31 4th Ave SW, Hutchinson & 2 pm on April 23, Peace Lutheran Church, 400 Franklin St SW, Hutchinson. CRS community choir presents their spring concerts featuring music with origins from Germany. info@hutchinsonarts.org, 320-587-0710, www.facebook.com/CrowRiverSingers

April 22, 23, 28, 29, 30, Prairie Arts Chorale Cool, Cool Water concert, April 22 at 7:30 pm, Redwood Valley High School, 101 George Ramseth Dr, Redwood. April 23 at 4 pm, Faith Lutheran Church, 310 Medayto Dr, Spicer. April 28 at 7:30 pm, Salem Lutheran Church, 631 N 7th St, Montevideo. April 29 at 7:30 pm, Unity Christian Reformed Church, 510 6th St, Prinsburg. April 30 at 4 pm, Marshall Middle School, 401 E Saratoga St, Marshall. The Prairie Arts Chorale Spring 2017 Concert Series is "Cool, Cool Water", featuring an extended medley from the musical "Big River" and other favorites, such as "Shenandoah", "Singin' in the Rain", and "Old Man River." daubv@yahoo.com, 507-342-5661, prairieartschorale.org

April 25, SMAC Board Meeting, 7 pm, SMAC Office, 114 N 3rd St, Marshall.

April 28, Traffic Signal Designs Reception, 7 pm, The Barn Theatre Event Room, 321 4th St SW, Willmar. Willmar Area Arts Council arranged for the creation of art on ten public traffic signal boxes for First Street in Willmar. Artists have created images that will be applied to vinyl wraps and put on the traffic boxes. This is the public reception to unveil the images for the traffic signal boxes. willmararts@gmail.com, 320-235-8560, willmarareaartscouncil.org

April 28, The Great American Songbook, Winsted Arts Council, 141 Main Ave W, Winsted. With Joyce Lyons & Phil Aaron. winstedartscouncil@gmail.com, 320-485-3330, winstedartscouncil.org

April 29, The Art of Fishing Artist Reception, 5 pm, Hutchinson Center for the Arts, 15 Franklin St SW, Hutchinson. A group invitational exhibit running from April 17-May 19. The reception will have artist/angler demos. info@hutchinsonarts.org, 320-587-7278, www.hutchinsonarts.org

April 29, Willmar Area Symphonic Orchestra’s Young Artists’ Concert, 7 pm, WEAC, 611 SW 5th St, Willmar. Featuring selections from the Young Artist Competition Winners bob@whitneymusic.com, (320) 214-9433, www.willmarorchestra.com

EARLY MAY SMAC EVENTS

May 5 & 6, SMAC Artist Retreat, Danebod Folk School, 140 Danebod Ct, Tyler. See cover page for details.

May 6 & 7, West Central Singers Sun, Moon & Stars Concert, May 6 at 7 pm, Green Lake Bible Camp Chapel, 9916 Lake Ave S, Spicer. May 7 at 4 pm, Calvary Lutheran Church, 302 Olena Ave SE, Willmar. westcentralingers@gmail.com, 320-235-1441, extension 17, www.westcentralingers.com
SW MN Arts Council Membership Form

Contributions are tax-deductible. Mail your membership donation to SW MN Arts Council, PO Box 55, Marshall, MN 56258.

Name/Organization______________________________________________________________________________________
Address_____________________________________City________________________State____________Zip_____________
Telephone_________________________ E-mail______________________________________County___________________

LEVELS OF PARTNERSHIPS:
$500.00 + Benefactor
$499.00 - $250.00 Patron
$249.00 - $100.00 Sustainer
$99.00 - $50.00 Supporter
$49.00 - $25.00 Contributor
Business & Organizational memberships starting at $50.00

Please consider making a gift to SMAC as a memorial or in honor of a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion.