



Wednesday, October 13, 2004

Creative Arts Volunteers: Where Would We Be Without Them?

“More than 50 volunteers from 14 states are here to assist with the 2004 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, coming from as far away as Minnesota,” said Belinda Karabatsos, host site volunteer coordinator. Although the American Legion Auxiliary is responsible for a number of the volunteers, other service organizations, friends of participants, and local Salt Lake City residents are all pitching in and giving the local organizing commit-



Helene Pockrus from Highland, Utah with performer Gina Fraley

tee a hand. Here is what some of our volunteers had to say about their many contributions to our event this week.

“This is my fourth year,” said Bill Bray of Minneapolis, Minn. Bray is here with his wife, Annette, who is also

volunteering at the Festival. Together, they drove 1,300 miles to volunteer. Annette Bray, a former American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Department President, VA employee, and hospitality room chairman for the 2002 Festival in Minneapolis, is spending her week ironing and sewing costumes and providing assistance to veterans wherever it may be needed. She believes that the Festival is a wonderful program and is grateful that the American Legion Auxiliary became a sponsor. As a volunteer at the local hospital, Bray has seen the rehabilitative power of music and the visual arts, and how they can help individuals overcome their disabilities. “The Festival is a worthwhile cause,” said Bill Bray, who plans to continue volunteering at the Festival with Annette for years to come.

“After retirement, I volunteered in the North Chicago VA library,” said Marion Schwerman of Libertyville, Ill. “I loved reading to the veterans and would leave them with my rendition of “Tokyo Rose,” she said. As an ALA member, Schwerman has been able to attend the Festival and volunteer for the last four years. Like so many Festival volunteers, Schwerman loves being here supporting the veterans. She enjoys providing them with hugs and smiles,



Annette Bray from Minneapolis, Minn. checks in one smiling staffer at Tuesday’s lunch.

and thanks them for what they have done for our country. She also hopes to continue attending future events.

“I lost two uncles in WWII and I want to give back,” said Marilyn Hobbs, past national executive committee member and department president for ALA. Hobbs, of Sioux Falls, S.D., became involved with the Festival in 2002. “My job is to assist with the fitting, sewing, and ironing of costumes, and helping veterans is what I like to do.”

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“Volunteers”

Local Disabled American Veterans (DAV) and DAV Auxiliary volunteers Helene and Marion “Tex” Pockrus from Highland, Utah, were the first faces some of us saw when landing in Utah. The Pockruses were the airport greeters and made sure everyone was given a friendly Utah greeting, received their luggage (even if it was late) and arrived at the hotel with little to no stress. “I am impressed most by the fun everyone is having,” said Helene. “I do not have an artistic bone in my body and I am looking forward to Friday night and the final production.” The Pockruses are spending the rest of the week helping out in the hospitality room and wherever else they are needed.

As Annette Bray put it, “the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is near and dear to our hearts.” All of our volunteers share their desire to do whatever it takes to make this week a success for our veterans. Thank you volunteers for all that you do - we couldn’t do this without you!

Mansfield Attends Festival

For the next two days, we will have a very special guest from Washington, D.C., Deputy Secretary Gordon H. Mansfield. Mansfield is an Army veteran who served two tours in Vietnam as company commander with the 101st Airborne Division and was wounded during the Tet Offensive of 1968.

He has asked to speak with you this evening at dinner. Please join us promptly at 5:30 p.m.!



Deputy Secretary Gordon H. Mansfield

Show Stoppers — The Voice: A Performer’s Most Valuable Tool!

The voice is probably the most valuable tool for any performer. It carries most of the content that the audience takes away. One of the oddities of speech is that we can easily tell others what is wrong with their voice, e.g. too fast, too high, too soft, etc., but we have trouble listening to and changing our own voices.

There are four main terms for defining vocal qualities:

- ◆ **Volume:** How loud the sound is. The goal is to be heard without shouting. Good speakers lower their voice to draw the audience in, and raise it to make a point.
- ◆ **Tone:** The characteristics of a sound. An airplane has a different sound than leaves being rustled by the wind. A voice that carries fear can frighten the audience, while a voice that carries laughter can get the audience to smile.
- ◆ **Pitch:** How high or low a note is. Pee Wee Herman has a high voice, Barbara Walters has a moderate voice, while James Earl Jones has a low voice.
- ◆ **Pace:** This is how long a sound lasts. Talking too fast causes the words and syllables to be short, while talking slowly lengthens them. Varying the pace helps to maintain the audience’s interest.
- ◆ **Color:** Both projection and tone variance can be practiced by taking the line, “This new policy is going to be

exciting” and saying it first with surprise, then with irony, then with grief, and finally with anger. The key is to **over-act**. Remember Shakespeare’s words “*All the world’s a stage*” – and presentations are the opening night on Broadway!

There are two good methods for improving your voice:

- ◆ **Listen to it!** Practice listening to your voice while at home, driving, walking, etc. Then when you are at work or with company, monitor your voice to see if you are using it the way you want to.
- ◆ **To really listen to your voice,** cup your right hand around your right ear and gently pull the ear forward. Next, cup your left hand around your mouth and direct the sound straight into your ear. This helps you to really hear your voice as others hear it...and it might be completely different from the voice you thought it was! Now practice moderating your voice.



Sponsoring the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival

Thanks, VA, HHV and ALA!



Did you know that the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival (NVCAF) actually began as two separate competitions? The visual arts competition, “VET ARTS,” began in 1981 and the performing arts competition, “The National Music Competition for Veterans,” started in

1982. The two merged in 1989 to create the NVCAF, spotlighting the four creative arts therapies. The Festival continues to showcase the artistic achievements of America’s veterans in art, music, dance and drama.

This year, 2,947 veterans from 100 VA medical facilities entered the competitions. A little over 140 medal-winning veterans earned invitations to attend this year’s Festival, with 108 of those veterans here this week.

Department of Veterans Affairs

VA continues to provide a leading role in the Festival. Veterans are encouraged by creative arts and recreation therapists at their local VA medical centers to participate.



A number of VA therapists and support staff serve in an advisory role all year, helping the host VA medical center to plan and orchestrate this special week.

“The NVCAF helps demonstrate that real healing goes well beyond a person’s physical needs,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi. “For many veterans, the Festival has been more than a one-week event. It is a stepping-stone to further artistic success.”

Although VA continues to play an important role, the Festival could not take place without its two other co-sponsors, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) and Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV). Liz Mackey, VA’s NVCAF Director, appreciates the collaborative efforts of both. “HHV and the ALA have made an enormous impact on the growth of the creative arts program for veterans,” Mackey said. “The people in both of these fine organizations understand that art, music, dance and drama can be used to express emotion, help with cognitive and physical challenges, and create a sense of satisfaction and life enhancing opportunities for veterans. Because of their support and enthusiastic response, more veterans than ever are given the chance to receive recognition and increase their quality of life through creative expression.”

American Legion Auxiliary

The ALA, with its almost one million members and nearly 10,500 local units, shines as an example of unselfish giving. The auxiliary is the world’s largest women’s patriotic service organization and plays an important role in the lives of America’s veterans.



This year marks ALA’s fifth year of co-sponsoring the NVCAF. Volunteers from ALA are at the Festival all week, helping at meals, in the hospitality suite, the costume room and many other Festival activities. The auxiliary also contributes significantly to the competition phase of the program, donating financial support, materials, supplies and hospitality items, and judging the local competitions.

“The Festival is one of the coolest

things we do for veterans,” said ALA National President Sandi Dutton. “We’ve been a national co-sponsor for just four years, but our members have rallied to this program big time. Anyone who experiences a local competition or has the privilege of attending a national Festival goes away feeling good about these talented, giving veterans, and about our role in promoting the arts as therapy.”

Help Hospitalized Veterans

In 1970, Roger Chapin was visiting wounded Marines at a naval hospital in San Diego. Because time seemed to weigh very heavily on these men, Chapin asked if

there was anything he could do for them. One Marine replied “give me something to do with my hands.”

After many surveys and discussions with numerous hospital staff members and patients, HHV was born. As Chapin put it, “as soon as we saw all the smiling faces when the first kits were handed out, we knew we had a winner.” Since its inception in 1971, HHV has delivered kits to VA medical centers, state veterans’ nursing homes and military hospitals worldwide.

For 11 years, HHV has proudly served as co-sponsor of the NVCAF. According to Mike Lynch, HHV’s executive director, “The NVCAF is a tremendous vehicle to highlight the wonderful creative abilities of one of America’s most precious commodities – our veterans.”

Many thanks to Help Hospitalized Veterans, the American Legion Auxiliary and the Department of Veterans Affairs, for all that they do every year to make the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival happen!



Photos from
the Festival



Hospitality Room



Costume Room



Meal Volunteer



Medical Support



Preparing for the Show





Watercolors



Sand Art



Festival Gala



Music



Dancing



Dining



Strokes of Art — Craft Care Workshop is Tonight!



The Arts and Crafts movement began in America in the late 1800's and was in its heyday through the 1920s. At that time, thousands of people discovered, for the first time, interesting crafts that turned into hobbies, to keep them busy when not working. The crafts resulted in something productive or ornamental, or both. Some people even made their own houses. Kit houses were produced in the United States beginning in the first decade of the twentieth century. Their popularity lasted into the 1950s.

While visiting wounded Marines in a Navy hospital, the founder of Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV) learned that many asked for something to help pass the time and the idea of craft kits was born. According to the HHV web site, "Craft kits are not to kill time, but to make

time." Today, HHV has delivered over 20 million craft kits to veterans and active duty military personnel. Craft care specialists employed by HHV are located in a number of VA medical centers, to help include arts and crafts activities in the overall treatment plans for veterans. So what, you may ask, does arts and crafts do for you?

According to HHV, arts and crafts activities improve feelings of self worth and self esteem. They improve physical functioning of both fine and gross motor skills. Working on crafts promotes independence, improves social interaction and teaches new skills. It also provides an opportunity to creatively express yourself. Many current and former participants in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival got their start through a craft care kit.

Don't be crafty – come to the HHV craft workshop tonight from 7:00 – 9:30 p.m. in the hotel, Bonneville I.

Meet the Artist – Joseph Shelleman

Each year, VA's Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development (JRRD) selects one piece of artwork to



feature as a journal cover during the upcoming year, chosen from that year's competition for the

National Veterans

Creative Arts Festival. The artist selected for this year's JRRD journal cover is Joseph Shelleman, of Grand Junction, Colo. (Be sure to read tomorrow's ArtsGram for more information about this very special artist!)

Meet Joseph Shelleman tomorrow (Thursday) during the Meet the Artist session in the hospitality room on the 4th floor (located in the Willow Room), from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. JRRD staff will serve as your hosts.

Park City Tour

Let's take a ride.

Visual artists will enjoy a short and relaxing 30-minute ride to Park City, Utah's historic mining town and world famous ski resort.



The area is known for "The Greatest Snow on Earth," with an annual snowfall of 350 inches. You'll want to dress for the unexpected, bring your sunglasses and your cameras. You'll tour the Utah Winter Sports Park and stroll through the many art galleries and shops as the city's expert guides share the tales of Park City's unique Main Street.

Meet you in the lobby at 9 a.m.



Get your Veterans History Project (VHP) interviews recorded today. Performers may record their interviews from 9 a.m. - 12 noon; and from 1 - 5 p.m. Artists may stop by in the evening, from 6 - 9 p.m. Tomorrow is Artist Day for the VHP interviews, taking place from 9 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.; and from 6 - 9 p.m.

To sign up, go directly to the VHP interview room, 302.

F.Y.I

Hospitality Room

The Hospitality Room, manned by friendly volunteers, offers snacks, soft drinks, juices and coffee for all Festival participants, staff and volunteers. The room is open from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. in the Willow Room on the fourth floor.



Professional Continuing Education

Continuing education courses will continue on Friday. The first session, "Work Rehabilitation: Improve Self Confidence and Job Performance," will be presented by Morris Bell, Ph.D. and the VA Office of Research and Development. This course will be available to staff and veterans. The other session for staff only, "Self Esteem: Issues and Treatment," will be presented by Sandy Negley. Look at the Friday ArtsGram for more details.

Medical Support Room



The medical support team is located on the second floor, room 202 and open at all times during the Festival week. Medical support team members will also accompany all tours away from the hotel. If you have a medical concern or health issue, please contact your team leader. We hope to make your stay here in Salt Lake City the very best!

Health Tidbits

It is much easier to get sunburned here due to our high altitude. Chronic sun damage causes skin cancer so it is essential to use good sun precautions. This includes the use of protective clothing, a wide-brimmed hat, sun glasses, and sunscreen application. There are two different ultraviolet sun rays that damage your skin — UVA and UVB. A good sunscreen blocks both UVA and UVB rays. Choose a sunscreen that contains one of these key ingredients: avobenzone, oxybenzone or titanium dioxide. Sunscreens and lip balms with a sun protective factor (SPF) of 15 or higher provide the best protection. Apply the sunscreen to your sun-exposed skin at least 30 minutes prior to sun exposure. Reapply the lip balm after eating or whenever your lips feel dry.

Meet with Your Team Leader

Meet with your team leader every morning at 8:30 a.m. Check with your team leader for the location of your meetings. On Friday, October 15th, the team leader meetings will be at 9:30 a.m.

Check out the Festival Web site at: www.creativeartsfestival.org

Those requesting hometown news releases will be able to download their release today. Photos will be available on Thursday.

Today's Weather

Mostly Sunny
High 68° - Low 44°



Wednesday, October 13

Breakfast — Hot Start Buffet

Fruit Preserves, Butter, Margarine and Cream Cheese
Sliced Fruit with a Honey Yogurt Dressing
Farm Fresh Scrambled Eggs
Seasoned Breakfast Potatoes
Bacon
Yogurt, Oatmeal, Assorted Cereal
Assorted Breakfast Breads
Low Milk, Hot Water, Hot Tea
Hot Chocolate
Orange, Apple, Cranberry and Grapefruit Juices
Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee

Lunch — Mexican Buffet

Taco Bowls, Vegetable Fajitas, Tortilla Chips, Shredded Lettuce
Diced Tomatoes
Diced Olives, Diced Onions
Shredded Cheese, Jalapeno Peppers
Sour Cream, Guacamole, Salsa
Seasoned Taco Beef, Refried Beans
Spanish Rice, Corn and Black Bean Salad, Seasonal Fruit Display
Churros
Coffee, Lemonade and Iced Tea
Low Fat Milk

Dinner — Traditional Buffet

Tossed Fresh Greens
Choice of Dressing
Fruit with Honey Yogurt Dressing
Vegetables and Herb Dip
Sliced Beef in a Demi-Glaze
Chicken Picatta
Scalloped Potatoes, Steamed Carrots
Mashed Potatoes
Assorted Desserts,
Hard Rolls and Butter
Coffee, Lemonade and Iced Tea

Wednesday, October 13



Artists



7:30 - 8:30 a.m. — Breakfast
Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor

8:00 a.m.
Team leaders meet with Katy Ryan
Oak Boardroom, 3rd Floor

8:30 a.m.
Team leaders meet with artists
Oak Boardroom, 3rd Floor

9:00 a.m.
Artists board buses for Park City trip

10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Artists trip to Olympic Winter Sports Park and Park City

Noon — Lunch
Olympic Winter Sports Park

*** All Day**
Help Hospitalized Veterans Craft Care Specialists arrive today

4:30 p.m.
Depart Olympic Winter Sports Park and Park City

5:00 p.m. — Dinner
Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor

7:00 - 9:30 p.m.
Help Hospitalized Veterans Craft Workshop at hotel
Bonneville 1, First Floor



Performers



7:00 — 8:30 a.m. — Breakfast
Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor

8:00 a.m.
Team leaders meet with Liz Mackey
Bonneville 1

8:30 a.m.
Team leaders meet with performers
Bonneville 1

9:00 a.m. - Noon
Technical move-in and set-up at Kingsbury Hall, University of Utah (no performers)

9:00 a.m. — Noon
Rehearsals continue at hotel

Noon — Lunch
Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor

1:30 - 4:30 p.m.
Rehearsals continue at hotel

5:00 p.m. — Dinner
Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor

6:30 p.m.
Performers depart for Kingsbury Hall (theater), University of Utah

7:00 - 10:00 p.m.
Technical run-through of show at theater (no orchestra)

10:00 p.m.
Depart for hotel

9:30 - 11:00 p.m. Karaoke and social time - *Fort Douglas Room, First Floor*