We Are One: The Arts Bring Oregonians Together

A Report on the 2008 Arts Build Communities Grants
Arts Build Communities

A REPORT ON THE 2008 ARTS BUILD COMMUNITIES GRANTS

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Cover photo: Shyla Frank at the “Spirit of the Horse” gathering at the Museum at Warm Springs. The designs on her shawl, dress, bag and cuffs match exactly the designs on the horse bridle, breast collar, and trappings. She also has a gathering basket on her saddle. Photo: Evaline Patt, The Museum at Warm Springs

Children at Joseph Elementary School participated in “The Big Read” in Wallowa County. In conjunction with reading Craig Lesley’s River Song, the students created a map of the setting of the book on which other students then posted their illustration of the story.

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Appreciating the Things that Unite Us

For more than a dozen years, the Oregon Arts Commission, with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, has supported efforts that incorporate the arts as a means to building stronger communities. In 2008, that support totaled $110,000 in grants to twenty-seven projects large and small across the landscape of Oregon. This has been the case since the Arts Build Communities program began in 1995.

Equally significant, the projects, as they have every year, connect the arts with issues facing thousands of Oregonians: changing demographics, transportation planning, downtown revitalization, preserving local traditions and community building. They speak to the vitality of the arts in towns and cities and exemplify efforts to connect the arts to the broader community. For instance:

- In Ashland: The largest regional theatre company in the nation opened its doors and performance spaces to the Rogue Valley’s growing Latino population.
- In Central Oregon: Tribal members celebrated the rich tradition of horse regalia and promoted inter-generational learning to sustain those traditions for future generations.
- In Echo and Stanfield: City officials and local artists used art and signage on the interstate to brand their small towns.
- In Washington County: A new website brimming with arts and culture information united artists, performers, cultural facilities and their diverse audiences.
- On the Oregon Coast: A Corvallis-based arts and health care effort was expanded to hospitals in Lincoln City and Newport.
- In North Portland: A neighborhood festival honored local artists and used the arts as a tool for community building and local economic development.

These projects and others reflect the power of the arts and artists to make their communities stronger, livelier and more prosperous.

Arts Build Communities projects are not the work of artists alone. These projects succeeded because thousands of Oregonians in communities across the state volunteered their time, muscle, money and expertise. Arts Commission funds were matched by more than $375,000 in revenues from other sources, most of them local. Another $130,000-plus was contributed in in-kind support from local companies and individuals.

Oregon’s arts are touchstones of community, essential to quality of life. They help us understand the commonalities that lie beneath our surface differences. They teach us that community, far from being weakened by our diversity, is made stronger by it.

Christine D’Arcy
Executive Director

Keys to Success in Arts Build Communities Projects

While each Arts Build Communities project is distinct and individual, there are common indicators that show how efforts succeed:

- A strong organization behind the project: skilled and experienced staff; specialized expertise; structure; support; volunteers.
- A demonstrated need in the community.
- Realistic and creative goals that respond to those needs: e.g., access to art or other services; economic development; education (arts or other); cultural understanding.
- Planning and preparation.
- Sufficient time and resources to do the job right.
- A connection to the spirit of the community and its residents.
- Participation (physical and financial) by community partners: media, business, schools, government, service organizations, funders.
- A practical way to assess progress and results.
- High quality art and a high quality experience for participants.
The Oregon Shakespeare Festival has many “firsts” to its credit, and in 2008 under the new artistic direction of Bill Rauch, it added another: its first community partner in La Clinica del Valle, the largest Latino organization in Southern Oregon. La Clinica is a health center, not an arts organization, but it proved to be a powerful and effective conduit to the Hispanic community.

OSF’s relationship with La Clinica enabled a successful year-long Hispanic outreach program that culminated in a highly popular Festival Latino from July 23 - 27, 2008.

When Bill Rauch joined OSF as artistic director in 2008, there was no question that the Festival’s outstanding reputation attracted audiences from the Pacific Northwest and California and much further away. But he felt something was missing: he wanted to strengthen the Festival’s ties to its own community and he decided to begin by cultivating the resources and potential audience of the Rogue Valley’s growing Hispanic population.

OSF staff created a year-long, two-way outreach program, to bring Latino culture to the Festival and to invite the Hispanic community to the Festival’s several theaters, a first-time experience for most of them.

The outreach program included steeply discounted theater tickets, Spanish captioning, bilingual pre-performance prologues and, perhaps most significantly, intensified high school, community college and university job opportunity outreach through OSF’s FAIR initiative (Fellowships, Apprenticeships, Internships and Residencies). When recruitment is completed for OSF’s 2009 season, it is expected that six out of nineteen (30%) will be Hispanic. In addition, Katrina Thompson, coordinator of Rogue Community College’s Latino Programs, has agreed to join the OSF board.

More good news: OSF expected five Latino actors would join OSF’s multi-ethnic company; instead, ten did. Two of them – Christopher Peterson in Our Town and Memmo Peterson in A View from the Bridge – made their professional debuts at OSF. With this wealth of Spanish-speaking talent, the Festival was also able to further enhance its communications with interviews on Spanish-language radio and participation in bilingual talks, workshops and community events.

By the time July 23 arrived, the ground had been well prepared for Festival Latino, funded in part with a $7,000 Arts Build Community grant. The week-long event transformed the OSF campus with six Latino/Hispanic performing groups appearing in the open air Green Show. The performers included Ballet Folklórico Ritmo Alegre featuring local youth in Mexican folk dance, dancers from Ashland’s sister city Guanajuato in Mexico, the samba ensemble Mambo Rico, David Valdez’
Project
Festival Latino

Organization
Oregon Shakespeare Festival

Principal Partners
La Clinica del Valle, Chamber Latino Network, Rogue Community College Latino Programs

Why It Worked
Created a powerful cultural exchange between OSF and Latino agencies and organizations in the Rogue Valley, particularly La Clinica del Valle, making available arts exposure, education and career opportunities to Latinos at OSF, and likewise offering a strong venue to celebrate Latino music, theater and dance.
Tradition Brought Back to Life:
A Warm Springs Custom is Revitalized

regalia: from regal ... the insignia or decorations of any rank or position, or of an order or society: splendid clothes, finery

We can all bring to mind examples of ceremonial regalia: crowns, tiaras and scepters, chains and medals, lavishly feathered headdresses, scarring and tattoos, elaborate neck and earrings, intricately beaded buckskin.

Humans have long used regalia on animals to demonstrate wealth, pride of ownership and spiritual power. Picture decorated elephants in Jaipur in India, elaborate harnesses on yaks in Tibet and the horses of Native American tribes.

Horses became integral to and highly-valued in Native American life immediately following their introduction to North America by the Spaniards in the 16th century. For the tribes, having horses was a leap forward in mobility akin to the introduction of the mass-produced car, many years later.

For Native Americans, horses improved hunting prowess, packed gear and supplies, and made it possible to travel faster and further than ever before. Eventually, the number of horses owned became a measurement of wealth in Native cultures, and horses decorated with regalia were integrated into traditional ceremonies.

Over time, the internal combustion engine supplanted the horse on the road and on the reservation, and the art of creating horse regalia receded into the past.

But a $6,000 Arts Build Communities grant enabled the Museum at Warm Springs, located on land belonging to the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs in Central Oregon, to create a program that not only displayed the rich tradition of horse regalia but revived interest in this art, with its many layers of significance.

The centerpiece of the project was “Spirit of the Horse,” a June 26 – September 8, 2008 exhibition that celebrated the role of the horse in the lives of Native Americans of the Columbia River plateau. The exhibit featured photographs, art objects with horse designs and beaded regalia from the tribal community. Interpreters told community members’ stories about their favorite horses, family cattle drives and rodeos. Several stories reached an even wider audience through broadcast over KWSO, the Warm Springs radio station. Over the 11 weeks of the exhibit, nearly 4,000 people visited the museum, whose facility is considered one of the most distinctive Native arts centers in the nation.

“Spirit of the Horse” opened with a traditional Memorial Horse Parade, including riderless horses in tribute to departed loved ones, and a salmon bake. The parade and the event gave people the opportunity, at an open mike, to recall family cattle drives. Museum Executive Director Carol Leone had her own story, “The whole family would go camping on these cattle drives. People my age and just a bit younger clearly remember them, and how much we enjoyed them. It just doesn’t happen anymore, and some of the kids don’t even know about that part of Warm Springs history.”

As a celebration of community culture, the exhibition opening was a resounding success. People enjoyed bringing old customs to light, and so many participated that organizers ran out of food at the salmon bake. Plans are afoot to hold the Memorial Horse Parade and salmon bake again in 2009.

Concurrent with the exhibit, Warm Springs master artists Chris Scott and Sandra McGill were hired to teach 36 community members how to make beaded regalia. Scott learned his craft from his mother, Gladys Thompson, a tribal elder and renowned beader. That inter-family relationship was reflected in the composition of the class, which included many mother-daughter, grandmother-granddaughter and sister pairs.

“It takes someone with a lot of experience to be able to share how to measure, so that what you’re beading will fit the horse,” explained Museum Director Leone. Beaded regalia include a martingale or breast collar, a bridle and trappings hung behind the saddle on the flank of the horse. Leone continued, “The classes were very well-received and attended. There are only a few families who still make horse regalia, so it was important to be able to share at least the basics with other people, younger people in the community.”

Sharena Warner participated in the parade during “The Spirit of the Horse”, organized by the Museum at Warm Springs.
The overall project, including the exhibition, memorial horse parade and salmon bake, and regalia classes allowed the museum to deepen its relationship with the community, to attract more visitors to the museum and to engage community members as resources for the museum. In addition it forged several more important relationships for the museum: with Phil and Penelope Knight who provided additional funds for the exhibit; with the Hallie Ford Museum of Art at Willamette University, which is bringing its monumental “Art of Ceremony” exhibit to the museum; and with that exhibition’s curator, Rebecca Dobkins, whose students will aid the museum in installing the exhibit.

“The Art of Ceremony,” a comprehensive exhibit of regalia, received a prestigious American Masterpieces grant from the Oregon Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts.

“The Spirit of the Horse” project supported The Museum at Warm Springs’ mission — to preserve, advance and share the knowledge of the cultural, traditional and artistic heritage of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs — through educational exhibitions and programs. The art of traditional horse regalia is at risk of being lost, as few tribal people today actively create the beautiful trappings that adorn the horses. The project incorporated inter-generational learning, which is an honored way of learning practiced for thousands of years by Native Americans.”

**Project**

Spirit of the Horse

**Organization**

The Museum at Warm Springs

**Principal Partners**

Warm Springs radio station KWSO, Phil and Penelope Knight, Hallie Ford Museum of Art, Willamette University

**Why It Worked**

Revitalized an important traditional art form related to the spiritual and cultural existence of the Warm Springs tribes by involving people directly in the process of making horse regalia and honoring it in celebration.

*Sharice Johnson was the first rider in the parade. She was followed by Marjorie Wahaneka from Umatilla, greeting the crowd with an eagle fan. The Warm Springs VFW Color Guard is in the background.*

*Photos: Evaline Patt, The Museum at Warm Springs*
Sculpted Horses Gallop into Echo and Stanfield

How do you draw attention to an area rich in history that’s off the beaten path? In Echo, population 715, you provide eye-catching art in the form of nine galloping horse sculptures clustered on Highway I-84 at the overpass exit. The highway is not unknown to public art. Fabricated metal salmon jump over a highway overpass west of The Dalles near Bonneville Dam. Pendleton to the east has three-dimensional cattle sculptures grazing near the highway. The folks at Echo figured, why not celebrate the horse in a public art display to mark exit 188 as the gateway to Echo?

The idea originally came to Paul Sutinen, a public art consultant hired by the Arts Commission to help the town create a brand for the community based on its rich history and heritage. As he researched the heritage of the region, he saw that horses were important to Native Americans in the area, including the Cayuse tribe, for hunting, travel and prestige. In the Echo-Stanfield area, settled between 1860 — 1870, the horse is a symbol of the history of ranching and the “wild west”, and also a symbol of dynamism and speed, valued attributes in today’s world.

Sutinen was inspired by the early photographs of Eadweard Muybridge as he conceptualized the art for the overpass. Muybridge used photography to prove there was a moment in a horse’s gallop when all four hooves were off the ground simultaneously. “Once I thought of horses, I immediately thought of Muybridge’s horses as an image we could work with,” Sutinen said. He modified the images and superimposed them into a picture of the overpass.

From there, Hermiston metal sculptor Chris Huffman was hired to create nine two-dimensional running horses for the overpass and two each around basalt columns for the exit signs for Echo to the south and Stanfield to the north, given direction by the way the horses are pointed. “Horses are basically what made this area,” Huffman said, referring to the farming and trapping activities of the early settlers. The horses are varying hues, thanks to a heating process Huffman used on the pieces. “Different temperatures bring out different colors,” he explained.

Diane Berry, administrator for the City of Echo, said it was tempting to use an Oregon Trail theme for the art at the exit and overpass, as the area has a strong tie to the famed trail and considerable pioneer history. “There are other towns associated with the Oregon Trail, so we thought, ‘Why not do something a little bit different?’”

The folks at the City of Echo who envisioned the public art see the overpass art project as manifesting the following: “This project provides a very visible display of artwork for locals and visitors to the area. Thousands of people will see the art each year and hopefully wonder about the ‘places’ beyond. This is an opportunity to use art to help with economic development, appreciation of geography and history, as well as adding to the region’s public art inventory.”

Eventually they plan to add an interpretive panel at the pullover south of the overpass to tell visitors more about the horse theme and geography.
Website Opens Virtual Doors to the Arts in Washington County

It’s a recipe for success. Take a large suburban county with rural areas and out-of-the-way places where artists live, add the power of the internet through an easily-accessed free website, mix them together, and presto, consumers and arts organizations are united with the click of a mouse.

The Westside Cultural Alliance, formed in 1999, is a coalition of arts, cultural, educational, government and business groups seeking to nurture and promote the arts and humanities in Washington County, with a population of 500,000 in twelve incorporated cities. In 2008, with an Arts Build Communities grant, it launched www.Artstage.info, a website for arts groups, patrons, performers and artists in the county. Linking the cultural calendars of entities like the Washington County Visitors Association, Beaverton Arts Commission, Viola Walters Art Center in Hillsboro and Tigard’s Broadway Rose Theater, the website is the area’s first streamlined information system readily available to locals and visitors.

So, if you’re a watercolorist living in Washington County and want to sell your work, you’re allotted space on the website for images of your work and your vital information. If you’re a singer, not only is your image on the site, but a downloadable sample of your current repertoire. Looking for a piano teacher close by? Chances are, you’ll find one by following the links at Artstage.info.

“Building a professional-looking, high-functioning website on a shoestring budget is what this has been all about,” said Vergie Ries, Westside Cultural Alliance executive assistant who helped organize the project. “There was a need in Washington County for an inventory of artists, performers and arts organizations, an initial first step to improve communication among arts organizations. Secondly, the project was designed to help the public learn what’s happening in their backyard.”

The group first developed a working concept of the site, which passed the success test with flying colors. “When the concept was shown, we invited leaders from different organizations, and we blew them away. All of a sudden, we had a connection, a network of communicators to help get the word out about Artstage.info. We’ve been adding new groups and people ever since,” Ries said.

“Our website is very concise. You don’t have to wade through pages and pages of things to read,” she said. The site has been designed in such a way that people anywhere on the globe searching for arts activities in Washington County can connect to Artstage.info, thanks to imbedded keywords. That’s especially useful since Washington County’s population is one of the most diverse in the state – thanks to the in-migration of thousands of high tech workers in the 1980’s and 90’s. And it was built for easy maintenance. “We didn’t want to have to keep going back to the well year after year asking for money. Our site can actually hold thousands of artists and their information before we need a major redesign,” said Ries.

Sharon Maroney, artistic director of Broadway Rose Theatre and long-time WCA board member, added: “I think it’s great not only in terms of visibility for various artists on the website: It’s also going to be valuable for building relationships.”

As of May 2009, the site hosts 10 arts organizations, representing approximately 1,000 artists and performers; 22 individual artists; 11 performers; and 20 sources for cultural events in Washington County.

THE WESTSIDE CULTURAL ALLIANCE’S NEW WEBSITE HAS QUICKLY BECOME A VALUED RESOURCE LINKING WASHINGTON COUNTY ARTISTS, ARTS AND CULTURE ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR PATRONS.

PROJECT
Artstage Info

ORGANIZATION
Westside Cultural Alliance

PRINCIPAL PARTNERS
Cultural Coalition of Washington County, Regional Arts and Culture Council, Washington County Visitors Association

WHY IT WORKED
Filled a need previously unaddressed to connect Washington County artists, performers and arts organizations to each other and the rest of the world by creating a low-maintenance, far-reaching, free website
ArtsCare’s Healing Powers Extend to Oregon Coast Hospitals

Art and healing go hand in glove. Whether you’re running your hand over the surface of a sculpture, listening to music, writing poetry or making a collage of found objects, art can take you to another place and another time. It can help you feel better, pain fades to the background and you’re open to life in a new way.

The staff at the Arts Center in Corvallis know about art’s curative powers. The center’s work since 2003 with cancer, dialysis and mental health patients at Samaritan Health Services hospitals in Corvallis, Lebanon and Albany has taken off, providing patients with a chance to make art, working with professional artists to enjoy live music in the hospital and to participate in creative writing programs.

In 2008 with an Arts Build Communities grant, The Center expanded its ArtsCare program into rural areas for the first time. Two Samaritan hospitals in Lincoln County (population 44,520), one in Newport and the other in Lincoln City, have developed programs to bring art to patients in a variety of ways.

In Newport, a hands-on workshop, “From Surviving to Thriving” for cancer patients was both popular and moving. Another group effort involved patients, staff members and even doctors and resulted in the completion of a mosaic at Newport’s 17-bed Samaritan Pacific Communities Hospital.

The 25-bed North Lincoln Hospital in Lincoln City became home to an Art Cart with art supplies for patients and their visitors, hosted harpists playing for patients and staff, and was the site of the development of another glass mosaic work by a local artist.

“This is a nation-wide movement,” said Arts Center executive director Sara Swanberg, referring to art and healing. “And the interesting thing is that most of the big programs countrywide are in large urban areas.” So the project involving Newport and Lincoln City is “one of the very rare rural programs. It’s a model in the country for rural sites.” The coastal hospitals and their patients responded so positively to the art activities, she added, that Samaritan Health Services will hire someone to oversee the programs in all five hospitals. “It’s really taking on a life of its own.”

Newport artist Cheri Aldrich, one of six artists hired to conduct “From Surviving to Thriving” workshops in Newport, guided 10 cancer patients in making “dreamsticks,” sticks of driftwood collaged with found objects—jewelry, beads, gauze and feathers. At first, some patients hesitated to get involved because they had no art experience, others weren’t comfortable in a group atmosphere. “I was really proud how they all took a chance, and in the end, 100 percent of the patients said they had fun. They felt very safe and free in the process.”

Artists grew from the experience, too. Newport watercolorist Marion Moir, who helped cancer patients make shell prints on rice paper, found the experience “incredible. It’s the most important thing I’ve ever done,” she said.

“Since 2003, the ArtsCare Program has expanded to serve patients and their families in kidney dialysis, mental health, cancer treatment, cardiac recovery, infusion and other individual patient circumstances. The program fosters a healing environment for patients, employees and visitors by using trained visual and performing artists in selected hospital/clinical settings. Its program components include regular sessions with trained artists who work with patients and staff; one-time projects that use local artists to create and install work designed to enhance aesthetics in a particular area, (such as a cancer treatment or mental-health unit); and ongoing training for staff and artists in conjunction with the Society for Art in Healthcare and other related organizations.” www.theartscenter.net
Principal Partners: Oregon Coast Council for the Arts, Samaritan Health Services

Why It Worked:
Brought art therapy in the form of workshops and art supplies to an area where cancer patients and other hospital patients previously had none, and helped them enter a creative zone that provided enjoyment, and created fellowship. Also provided aesthetics in a hospital setting, and brought a meaningful experience to local artists teaching art.

Project:
The ArtsCare Program in Newport and Lincoln City

Organization:
The Arts Center

Right:
Staff, patients and their families, and visitors participated in the creation of a large art mosaic at Samaritan Health Services Hospitals.

Left:
Surviving to Thriving, one of the workshops offered through Arts Care, linked local artists with cancer survivors.

Trained Arts Care visual artists work with patients and their families using mosaic, painting and clay.
Art on Alberta / Art Hop

Cultural Diversity Celebrated through Art on the Street

Art on Alberta is committed to fostering art-related community events that allow its historic north Portland neighborhood to flourish. Its goals include using the arts as a tool for community building and economic development including the signature annual Art Hop, an all-day celebration that takes place on a Saturday in May. Like many neighborhood celebrations, Art Hop promotes local businesses and vendors, with the exception that, on Alberta Street, many of those businesses are art-related and that most of the vendors are artists. The event is always colorful and exuberant but, in 2008, the organizers decided to take a step up in visibility.

For the first time in the festival’s nine-year history, it closed 17 blocks of Alberta Street to motorized traffic. Artists took over the street; paraders marched with ease; and children and families strolled freely. With artist vendor booths on the street, sidewalks were unclogged and foot traffic moved more fluidly through the neighborhood.

These keystones — opening the street and focusing on a triad of culturally diverse artists — paired with using an outside firm, Combustible Media, to handle logistics and promotion, resulted in the most successful festival to date. The nonprofit also saw an increase in membership and volunteers because of the event.

Themed “Synergy,” the 2008 Art Hop celebrated the cultural diversity of Alberta Street’s rejuvenated business district and North Portland neighborhood. The event honored three emerging artists whose ethnicity represents the area’s cultural diversity. The organization worked for over a year to cultivate relationships that would result in prominent display of the artists’ work not only during the Art Hop but in the weeks leading up to the event, as well.

With three featured artists named, — Adrienne Cruz, an African-American quilter; Analee Fuentes, a Mexican-American painter whose work is influenced by the Mexican baroque period; and Tripper Dungan, a painter and puppetmaker who’s been known in the neighborhood for years — Art Hop staff forged partnerships with local businesses that made the 2008 festival a success.

Among the most significant were agreements with Guardino Gallery, which displayed one of Cruz’ brilliantly colored and richly patterned quilts in its window for the month leading up to Art Hop; and Black United Front, which in addition to having one of Cruz’ quilts on permanent display in the lobby, agreed to hang four of her oversize banners from its façade during the festival.

Analee Fuentes, who admits to a passion for things that are “ornate, excessive and overdone,” exhibited works at other neighborhood venues, Onda Arte Latina Gallery and the GROW Gallery.
Tripper Dungan, whose work is more whimsical, credits cartoons as a principal inspiration. His paintings were shown at Cork, the local wine shop, and at Alleyway Café. At the end of the day, he delighted all with a performance of his original shadow puppets crafted from cereal boxes.

Overall, Art Hop 2008 attracted more community participation than ever before. School groups and performers clamored to be in the parade, which included new vaudevillians March Fourth Marching Band, African drummers and Tears of Joy puppeteers. Festival goers reflected the diversity of the neighborhood, and a day-of survey revealed that 54% had not attended Art Hop before; that 48% did not come to Alberta Street often; and, while most festival-goers were from Portland, 22% came from elsewhere including Tigard, Lake Oswego, Seattle and San Diego.

Hilary Pfeifer, Art on Alberta board president, said, “We were really pleased with how Art Hop 2008 came together. With ‘Synergy’ as our overarching theme, we were able to draw new elements of the community into the event and build partnerships that continue to strengthen and expand.”

Pfeifer concluded, “Our mission is to enhance the way that art builds communities. Our goal is to make Art Hop more art- and family-focused. Education is a huge component of what we do.”

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**Project**
The Art Hop

**Principal Partners**
Combustible Media

**Why It Worked**
Featured artists, street performances, art booths and demonstrations. Local businesses collaborated to present arts-related events reflecting the ethnic and cultural diversity of the area. The festival helped area residents celebrate their diversity and continued to contribute to the revitalization of the neighborhood.

**Organization**
Art on Alberta, www.artonalberta.org
Oregon author Craig Lesley surrounded by students at Enterprise Elementary School. Lesley’s book, River Song, was Fishtrap’s “Big Read” in Wallowa County where 1,300 residents participated in a wide variety of book-related activities.

Snapshots

Summaries of Arts Build Communities Projects

The Oregon Arts Commission awarded $110,000 through the Arts Build Communities grant program in 2008. Those funds supported 27 diverse projects, including the six showcased in this publication. On the following pages are capsule descriptions of the remaining projects. Comments are excerpted from reports and materials submitted by the grantee organizations.

Actor’s Theatre, Camelot Theatre Company / Feasibility Study for New Building

With an ABC grant, Camelot Theatre Company completed a yearlong, countywide planning and feasibility study for construction of a new theater building. Lisa James Consulting, Inc. of Medford conducted over 40 interviews with potential supporters to engage them and solicit feedback on the project. Data was gathered from other performing arts organizations in the Rogue Valley to assess the need for a new theater. Actors, designers, patrons, technicians and board members participated in focus groups to help develop architectural plans.

“Camelot Theatre Company believes that a new theater building will allow for expansion of the adult and youth conservatory to year-round programs and a wider range of classes, and the popular summer youth conservatory program can be broadened and expanded as well. A new theater building will allow greater opportunity to meet students’ interests in theater arts via student outreach programs by filling the gap in theater arts education caused by public school cutbacks. A greater connection with area youth will promote a love of live theater, while building a future customer base.”

[www.camelottheatre.org]
Snapshots: Summaries of Arts Build Communities Projects

Cart’m / Outreach and Education Program

Cart’m Recycling, collaborating with community organizations, state parks and area teachers, developed a multi-faceted education and outreach program to create art using recycled materials diverted from waste. In addition to presenting a recycling lesson for the first time for 100 5th graders in Tillamook County, Cart’m conducted 13 onsite tours, presented four programs about “reduce, reuse, recycle” for families at Nehalem Bay State Park and prepared an interactive trash-art booth at the Manzanita Farmers Market. Using local talent, it created a reuse and costume-making workshop, then organized a “Trashion Fashion” show, among other projects.

“With Oregon Arts Commission’s support and the enthusiastic collaboration of others in our community, we have built an incredible program, doubling the number of trash workshops from three to six from last year, and realized a 7% drop in contamination from recycling bins since the installation of new information signs. Together, we have expanded access to art by utilizing a resource that everyone has, and most have too much of – trash. Everyone can learn to see waste as having further potential to be reused or recycled. In fact, that realization is enlightening, that feeling of finding a treasure, of creating something valuable and of doing something good for the earth.” [www.cartm.org]

Children’s Healing Art Project (CHAP) / The Million Bead Project

In pursuit of its mission to bring the healing power of art to children in crisis, CHAP provided beading classes, jewelry workshops and one-on-one art instruction in Portland hospitals where youngsters are treated. The calming, repetitive power of beading, transforming nervous energy into creative energy, helped kids, parents and other adults in health care facilities deal with grief and uncertainty. The number of people CHAP served grew to 10,000 in 2008. Its Million Bead Project, a collection of bead strands and prayers by individuals, has become part of a public art sculpture to raise money for the organization. CHAP’s distinctive beaded bracelets are being worn and seen on more children and adults as the program matures and grows.

“CHAP expanded beading programs in the hospitals to include staff during grief counseling meetings, in the pediatric intensive care unit, playrooms, one-on-one sessions in rooms, outside surgery wards … Our outreach exploded in 2008, and our team of teaching artists took beading to Mario’s spring fundraiser for CHAP, into homes during hospice care, to Art in the Pearl, Mississippi Street Fair, Wieden + Kennedy kids art events Columbia Sportswear’s nonprofit gathering, Lion Heart’s event for children with congenital heart defects, fundraising birthday parties in CHAP world headquarters and the now-famous CHAP Holiday Bizarre.” [www.chap.name]

City of Cannon Beach / Sculpture Without Walls

Now in its third year, Sculpture Without Walls is a yearlong outdoor sculpture exhibition, with the dramatic coastal setting of Cannon Beach, population 1,665, as its backdrop. Each year, a panel of jurors selects five sculptures for public display, and a final “People’s Choice” piece, to be displayed permanently, is chosen in May before the busy visitor season. Art is an important part of the town’s economy, with the area drawing about 750,000 tourists annually to enjoy the ocean setting and numerous galleries and art-related shops. With ABC funding in 2008, the City continued to build its public art collection, advancing its goal of six permanent pieces in the collection in six years.

“As an outdoor art project that uses public land for artwork installation, this project is equally accessible in a tangible way to every segment of the general public. Residents and visitors alike will encounter Sculpture Without Walls art

Left: Dana Cunningham Anderson and Cathy Silver collaborate on the creation of a welded piece at Cart’m that will become the gate to Anderson’s property. The materials were reclaimed from a fire that burned Anderson's studio to the ground. Right: “The Throne” by Nicky Falkenhayn was one of the five works selected for the Sculpture Without Walls installation in Cannon Beach.
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pieces as they travel within the community. This project strengthens the perception of Cannon Beach as an arts community by involving local arts organizations in the planning process, placing sculptures in highly visible public locations, and by involving the public in the voting and selection process. As a result of the event, several private property owners have indicated an interest in installing public art on commercial sites. [www.ci.cannon-beach.or.us]

Community School of the Arts / String Fever

The Community School of the Arts at Eastern Oregon University partnered with the Grande Ronde Symphony Orchestra, the Grande Ronde Youth Orchestra and the La Grande School District on the String Fever project. Funded with an ABC grant in 2008, the program directly served 30 first through sixth graders in rural Union County. String Fever’s participants learned to play violin, viola, cello and bass, then performed newly learned works. The CSA, a self-supporting program offered by the EOU College of Arts and Sciences, has grown to serve 485 students yearly through its overall programs.

“Beyond just providing opportunity, participation in a youth program such as String Fever has a very real and measurable effect. According to America’s for the Arts, young people who participate in these types of art-education programs are more likely to succeed academically, emotionally and socially. These early-life opportunities lead to a more engaged and better-educated citizen, ultimately strengthening that community’s prospects for job procurement and economic development.” [www.eou.edu/csa]

Cove Community Association / Cove Arts Festival and Fair

Established in 1999 as a nonprofit volunteer organization, the Cove Community Association implements community priorities described in the strategic plan for this fruit growing community in the Grande Ronde Valley. The Cove Arts Festival, begun in 2000 with an Arts Build Communities grant, offers two days of art classes and related activities conducted by skilled artists from all over the Northwest. The Cove Cherry Fair, held the following day, gives local farmers, artisans and others an opportunity to sell their goods, plus offers all the attractions of a traditional rural fair, including games, history tours and more. Partners for the 2008 festival included Music Over the Valley and Arts In the Schools.

“Cove is a small rural community in Northwestern Oregon. Due to its small population and relatively low tax base, money to pay for arts and music education in schools is sparse, and the area, being remote from large population centers in the state, is not considered a tourist destination. By producing these events, the CCA attempts to address the issues of low tax base and lack of tourism dollars. Our efforts have resulted in increased awareness of Cove in the rest of the state, and they have helped create a following from residents in the area participating in these programs.”

Crossroads Carnegie Art Center/ ArtSpeak

The ArtSpeak project in Baker City offered quality instruction in drama, music, dance and the graphic arts to children and families to strengthen the arts in the community and provide classes to underserved members of the area. Now in its twentieth year, ArtSpeak has worked closely with the school district to provide after-school programs for children in grades K-8 who would not have access through traditional means.

“The children of our community have come to look forward to ArtSpeak classes being available, and we want to be that consistent, positive, reliable source of culture for them. The number of classes and variety of disciplines were expanded in

Left: Wool spinning demonstrations were one element of the Cove Arts Festival and Fair in the Grande Ronde Valley.
Right: Estacada’s Summer Celebration included performances featuring handcrafted puppets and live music.
2008, with classes at schools and at the Crossroads Carnegie Arts Center. The collaborations with the community remain strong. Twenty years is a long time, and we are proud of what ArtSpeak continues to offer. Crossroads remains clearly committed to creating opportunities for the entire community by engaging, inspiring and transforming through participation in the arts. [www.crossroads-arts.org]

**Estacada Area Arts Commission and Estacada Together / Summer Celebration**

Presented by the Estacada Area Arts Commission and Estacada Together, the Summer Celebration was a free music and arts festival including 15 music and dance performances, 12 hands-on arts activities for children and adults, a juried art fair, and a celebration of an outdoor mural completed by the Artback Artists Cooperative. Attendance was the highest ever in the event’s seven-year history, with 3,000 residents and visitors attending, and 150 volunteers involved.

“Beside fostering positive community spirit, The Summer Celebration strengthened the arts in Estacada by providing a free, celebratory, joyful environment for residents and visitors to explore a variety of diverse music and art experiences. Focussing on both local and regional talents, it was a great source of civic pride and awareness of the excellence that exists in our community. Attendees and participants represented a true cross-section of the community. The event has been a spark for fresh ideas and collaborations, both civic and artistic, and has brought people together in new ways.” [www.estacadasummercelebration.org]

**Fishtrap / “Wallowa County Reads River Song”**

Fishtrap continued its nationally recognized “Big Read” work by facilitating and creating related events around the community-wide reading of River Song by noted Oregon author Craig Lesley. Community events included a reading and question-and-answer session with Lesley, related lectures, discussion groups, classroom visits by other speakers, art projects, a traveling photo exhibit, a showing of films related to Wallowa County and a salmon potluck. Participation in the program was high with 934 adults and 431 students involved, collaboration with three school districts in the area, and 49 community volunteers pitching in.

“Wallowa County Reads River Song” reached over 1,365 people in Wallowa County, nearly a fifth of the local population, 115 more participants than originally aimed for. Hundreds of people read a fine book that speaks to important regional issues, met the author, heard lectures on related topics, viewed photographs and films, made and viewed art work, learned about the geography of the Pacific Northwest, with some consequently inspired to pursue additional unplanned events in the area. We like to believe that such an intensive level of participation created a lasting impact. We couldn’t be happier with the results.” [www.fishtrap.org]

**Miracle Theatre, Teatro Milagro / beat and puente Residency Programs**

Teatro Milagro, continued its beat (Bilingual Education Arts Teacher/Training Training) and Puentes residency programs in Jackson and Clackamas counties, targeting primarily English as Second Language learners and Spanish language pupils for the outreach. With guidance from visiting actors from Miracle Theatre, pupils created and wrote sketches about social issues such as teen pregnancy and drug addiction, performing them afterwards for an audience, alongside a visual art and photo display of work from their classrooms.

“Being able to inspire young people to continue with their educational efforts, and empower them to change the world for the better is a fantastic accomplishment. With budget cuts in schools, collaboration is the operative word for success. With the Latino population in Oregon growing, these bilingual programs provided by Milagro are a necessary component that all teachers want to have in their classrooms, so it is for everyone’s benefit that Milagro strives to be the leader in evaluation for successful programs in the future as well. Both Canby and Central Point, along with a new school district in Prineville, began planning 12 months earlier for spring of 2009, so with a year’s discussion in the works, we can only hope for great community interactions to come.” [www.milagro.org]

**Multicultural Association of Southern Oregon, Ballet Folklorico Ritmo Alegre / Ballet Folklorico Cultural Ambassador Program**

The Ballet Folklorico Cultural Ambassador Program was designed to foster values of respect, responsibility and cooperation and to bring recreation and cultural enrichment to a diverse group of children in Southern Oregon. The Cultural Ambassador program enabled Ballet Folklorico Ritmo Alegre, a 15 year-old traditional Mexican dance troupe in the Rogue Valley, to train six instructors from the Performance Company at the Kid’s Unlimited after school program in Medford. The project also brought in professional guest teachers to share information on the origins and symbolism of the music and dance, and created opportunities for area youth to dance in public performances.

“The Talent and White City after-school classes reported a high level of satisfaction with their dance experience and pride in their performance experiences, including having the courage to dance in front of their peers at a school festival or managing to dance for two miles in a parade. Parents reported great appreciation for the program, citing increased cultural pride in their children and families as a whole, and expressing thanks for the opportunity to participate in dance classes they could not otherwise afford, as 92% are low income. Jackson elementary first-grade classes were the most diverse group in racial, cultural and socioeconomic terms. The non-latino of the classes reported an almost 100% increase in their understanding of what ballet folklorico is, and all students reported that they enjoyed the classes, respected each other more, and were proud of their performance experience.” [www.mcaso.org/balletfolklorico.html]
My Story / Photography Workshops

In 2008, My Story facilitated three two-week photography workshops for 24 low-income youth living in New Columbia, a recently revitalized 82-acre housing community in the Portsmouth neighborhood of North Portland. The participants, 11-14 year old singers, writers and dancers, explored their lives through photographs and writing. On evenings and weekends, they interviewed and photographed family members and community leaders, interacting with elders and sharing stories. The kids expressed themselves with honesty and candor, and in doing so, produced a stirring collection of autobiographical, family and community portraits.

“The kids at New Columbia have a great need for safe, meaningful youth activities. They face tremendous peer pressure to join gangs and engage in other unhealthy behaviors. Many of these youngsters come from single-parent households without adult supervision. Their parents can’t afford after-school and summer activities enjoyed by their more financially well-off peers. My Story helps fill this need by providing free, fun summer workshops that engage the imagination and spark the creativity of New Columbia youth. It also provided a sense of pride and accomplishment.”

www.mystoryworkshops.org

Neighborhood Pride Team, dba Trillium Artisans / Training for Low-Income Craftspeople

Trillium Artisans assists underserved low-income craftspeople in growing their green crafts businesses. In 2008, an Arts Builds Communities grant supported Trillium’s product review and peer-networking meetings, workshops and classes, as well as online marketing of new artisans on the group’s website. The number of artists involved grew from 26 to 44, an increase of 69% from the previous year. Of the 20 low-income artisans involved for more than one year, 95% achieved a 25% increase in sales. Product review more than doubled. Of the 25 new artisans who submitted work for review by Trillium, 22 joined Trillium, bringing 60 new products into its retail store in outer Southeast Portland.

“Trillium strives for excellence in both its community process and in supporting craftspeople in increasing their business sales. That process occurs through integrating customers and artisans into the product review process, providing opportunities for peer networking through artisan meetings, as well as a phone list and an online group, having an artisan sit on the board, recruiting for the board from the community at large, and more. The executive director has a long track record of community organizing. The principles of community empowerment and member involvement are integral to the function of Trillium as a whole.”

www.trilliumartisans.org

Oregon Cultural Access, The Disability Art and Culture Project: Art and Culture Festival

The three-day Disability Pride Art + Culture Festival, with help from an Arts Build Communities grant, strengthened the arts in Portland’s disabled community through a festival-style event. Components included an evening performance, an art reception and lecture, and a short films program with discussion afterwards. Participants ranged in age from 15 to 68. The event allowed the public to share the richness of disability culture and the arts and to experience the work of dancers, poets, photographers, visual artists and video artists. The Arts Build Communities grant funds supported stipends to the participating artists.

“The mission of the Disability Arts and Culture Project is to further the artistic expression of people with both hidden and visible disabilities. We view disability as a natural and valuable variation of the human form. DACP utilizes the arts as a method of examining the relationship between disability and society. We also support established and emerging artists as well as the community at large in developing knowledge and expression of disability culture and pride. We promote the artistic and cultural development of Portland’s disability communities, and challenge traditional thinking about those who are disabled.”

www.dacphome.org/festival

Left: Seventeen artisans, shown here, participated in web training and are among the many regular participants at Trillium’s monthly gatherings. Right: Emcees Jerry McGill and Carole Zoom perform in Portland during the Disability Art and Culture Project.
Oregon Historical Society / Oregon Tribes Project

Through a collaboration with Oregon’s nine federally recognized tribes, the Oregon Folklife Program of the Oregon Historical Society developed a traveling panel exhibition focused on the richness of the state’s contemporary tribal culture. Using native voice, tradition, art forms, photographs and images of historic artifacts, the exhibit tour coincided with Oregon’s Sesquicentennial, the 150th anniversary of statehood in 2009. The show was displayed in tribal centers, libraries, cultural centers and museums with Native artists presenting public programs at each venue.

“With the potential to revitalize communities, build social capital, and give people shared cultural experiences, the project united people in addressing local social issues and promoting tolerance, empathy and understanding of people from all walks of life. The state’s sesquicentennial in 2009 provided an ideal opportunity to educate the public about Oregon Indians. There are no other exhibits that educate the public about the contemporary life and cultures of all of Oregon’s tribes. This project supported cultural renewal efforts, built new partnerships and reaffirmed cultural expression and Native community cohesiveness in a way that appropriately commemorates the sesquicentennial and helps shape Oregon’s next 150 years.”

Oregon Symphony / Community Music Partnership

The Oregon Symphony developed a Community Music Partnership with the eastern Oregon communities of La Grande and Cove. The activity funded by an Arts Build Communities grant was part of the project’s longer timeframe, a two-year project that began in July 2007 and will continue to June 2009. This partnership reflects the Symphony’s first one with two rural communities simultaneously and included in-school visits with symphony musicians and resident conductor Gregory Vajda, a day-long music festival led by Vajda, full-orchestra youth concerts for 2,400 K-12 students, and Symphony chamber music performances in eastern Oregon. One of the project highlights was a backstage tour of Portland’s Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall for 40 musicians of the Grande Ronde Symphony.

“Because the project is crafted to the specific needs of Cove and La Grande, the community is wholly invested in the project. The Community Music Partnership creates an interlocking network that is strengths-based, in which each constituent is an equal part of the whole, bringing proficiency and expertise to the shared experience. Each constituent from other CMP communities such as Redmond, North Bend, Baker City and Estacada, can share knowledge and lessons learned, leading to self-sufficiency and sustainability beyond the two-year period, thus maximizing the project’s impact during the partnership itself.”

Rogue Valley Community Development Corporation / Theater Quest

Theater Quest’s primary project goal was to develop a shared vision and path for creating and enhancing performing arts opportunities in underserved areas of Jackson County. With an Arts Builds Communities grant, a study was commissioned to examine the need for creating a new community-based performance space in the Medford area, and to develop a long-range plan for developing that space. The project inventoried existing performing arts venues, surveyed technicians, artists and organizations, and produced a market study outlining the steps for a long-range plan.

“The Theater Quest Project will strengthen the arts and the community by creating strong bonds and common visions between the various performing arts resources and with the general public. The project will also build awareness among the greater community of the value, excitement and potential of cultural riches. Art and community development research indicates that the presence of arts in a community is a means of enhancing all manner of community capacity, from improving education levels and housing stock to increase land values and population density.”

Ross Ragland Theater / Taste of Klamath

Ross Ragland Theater’s sixth annual Taste of Klamath was a successful community event celebrating the culture, products, people and quality of life in Klamath Falls. The festival supports both city and county efforts to further develop the region as a tourism destination. Combining the Ross Ragland Theater’s organizational strengths with other community partners enabled the event to raise over $3,000 for scholarships and grants for community organizations to offset their costs associated with using RRT facilities for programming. The 2008 Taste of Klamath drew a record number of participants, and posted 111% growth from the previous year.

“With the help of the record-breaking attendance at the food-focused portion of the festival and the addition of an art contest/show and concert, nearly 800 more members of the community were able to enjoy the event than in previous years. This year’s increased participation further grows the name recognition of the Taste of Klamath and Ross Ragland Theater. Just one individual who had a powerful positive experience can help the event grow exponentially as attendees talk about the event.”

Sojourn Theatre / “Throwing Bones”

Sojourn Theatre produced “Throwing Bones,” an original theatrical piece examining cross-cultural perspectives on medicine, miracles and mortality in South Africa and North Portland. Partnering with area groups, Africa House, Jefferson High School, medical institutions and others, Sojourn presented an accompanying series of education and community engagement events in January and February 2008 to further involve Portland’s com-
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communities of African immigrants, African-Americans, healthcare professionals, traditional naturopathic healers, and the general public. The theatre has attracted national attention for its community engagement work and has undergone exceptional growth, with earned income increasing 500% from fiscal years 2003 to 2008.

“Sojourn Theatre is an award-winning, multi-ethnic, multilingual ensemble exploring contemporary life through adventurous theatrical approaches to complex material. The company makes and often tours new performances in Oregon and around the nation. Our process and programming is community-engaged. Our work is strikingly physical, politically inquisitive and history-conscious. Using story, metaphor and event, we work locally, regionally and throughout the country to surprise audiences, stimulate civic dialogue and bridge urban, suburban and rural communities.”

www.sojourntheatre.org

The Dalles Art Center / Gorge Artists Open Studio Tour

In its second year, the Gorge Artists Open Studio Tour helped make art more accessible, helped local artists sell their work and provided increased opportunities for artists and the public to interact. In April 2008, about 800 art tourists, a 10 percent increase over the first year, traveled to the Columbia Gorge to visit the studios of 35 artists. Artists had an opportunity to sell their work directly to collectors, to meet and develop relationships with other artists, and to demystify the arts for the public. A four-color tour guide helped attract about one-third of the visitors from outside the Gorge, bringing money into the region. As a result, evidenced by their growing financial support of the event, local businesses acknowledge the arts as a potential driver of economic development.

“Gorge Artists Open Studios involves all facets of the Gorge art community on both sides of the Columbia River. Columbia Center for the Arts, the White Salmon Arts Council and Maryhill Museum are all helped support the event with promotion and tour-guide sales. Individual artists are very enthused about the project, as are local businesses.”

www.thedallescenter.org

Write Around Portland / Workshops

Write Around Portland offered writing workshops to people affected by HIV/AIDS, veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder, people in prison, survivors of domestic violence, individuals in addiction recovery, senior citizens and others who are isolated or have other barriers. Organizations the group partnered with in 2008 included Coffee Creek Correctional Facility for incarcerated women, Multnomah County Inverness Jail for men, New Avenues for Youth for homeless youth and residents of ROSE Community Development’s affordable housing. The program grew by 20% in 2008 to involve 544 individuals. Quantitative data from the program revealed that most attendees reported improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem. An anthology of 186 participants’ writings, “A Rare and Necessary Time”, was published to document the work.

“Write Around Portland’s impact on our community can be measured in the increased demand for our programs and the increase in financial contributions from partner agencies. The number of people served is our most concrete measure, but success can also be defined by the number of audience members at readings or the number of donors. Every year, these measures have increased. Anecdotal evidence from people transforming their lives through the power of writing continues to be our most powerful measure of success.”

www.writearound.org

Arts Build Communities grants are available to nonprofits, schools, and local governments interested in building community through art. The program provides $3,000 – $7,000 grants for arts and community development projects in rural and urban under-served communities. To request an application or for information, contact the Arts Commission at (503) 986-0082 or visit www.oregonartscommission.org. FY2010 applications must be postmarked by October 1, 2009.