

Hosted
by the VA
Eastern
Colorado
Health
Care
System

2005 Arts gram

Thursday, October 20, 2005



A DAILY PUBLICATION OF THE 2005 NATIONAL VETERANS CREATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL

Thank You, VA, ALA and HHV, for Believing in the Arts

"He who works with his hands is a laborer. He who works with his hands and his head is a craftsman. He who works with his hands and his head and his heart is an artist." ~ St. Francis of Assisi

Since the U.S. Constitution was born, the nation has supported the creative expression of the American people. That strong commitment to fostering the arts continues today.

In this spirit, our three presentors of this event share a belief in the arts through their support of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival (NVCAF). Since 1981, national and local competitions have showcased the expressive talents and artist achievements of our nation's veterans.

This year, nearly 2800 veterans from 101 VA medical facilities entered the competition phase of the 2005 event. Of that number, more than 130 medal

winners earned an invitation to attend this week's Festival. We offer a heartfelt 'thank you' to our three presenters, as well as our many civic and corporate sponsors, for helping bring this inspiring display of American talent to life.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

VA continues to have a leading role in the Festival. Complementing its mission of providing healthcare services, compensation and burial benefits to American's veterans, VA believes in celebrating the creativity of those who served. "The Department

of Veterans Affairs is committed to healing beyond just physical rehabilitation," said R. James Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs. "The National



ALA Colorado Department Secretary Chris Harvey; ALA Local Steering Committee Member Sinnamon Menke; and ALA National President Carol Van Kirk discuss the Festival in the hospitality suite earlier this week.

Veterans Creative Arts Festival provides an artistic channel for our nation's heroes to recover physically, mentally and emotionally."

Dedicated therapists at VA medical centers throughout the country encourage veterans to participate. A number of VA staff serve in key advisory roles throughout the year, assisting the host VA medical center in making this special week a reality. During the Festival itself, VA employees from the local area and across the country work in all aspects of the program, serving as committee members, team leaders, helping with the art exhibit, workshops, stage production, and every other part of the event.



Joan Reinstein, HHV craft care specialist, and Mike Lynch, HHV executive director, assist Festival participants with their craft kits on Wednesday.

See "Thank You," continued on page 2

“Thank You,” continued from page 1

Supplementing VA’s role, the concerted efforts of its other two sponsoring organizations, the American



Legion Auxiliary (ALA) and Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV), are what make the event happen

today. Liz Mackey, National Director of the Creative Arts Festival, credits the collaborative efforts and generosity of both. “HHV and ALA believe wholeheartedly in the priceless value of art, music, dance, drama and creative writing, as well as promoting the participation of gifted individuals in this event, and enriching the lives of those who experience the art firsthand,” Mackey said. “These wonderful organizations understand the power of any and all art forms in expressing emotion, overcoming cognitive and physical challenges, creating a sense of self-worth, and leaving lasting impacts on both the artist and the audience. Because of their extraordinary support, growing numbers of veterans are being recognized and forever changed through creative expression.”

American Legion Auxiliary

With nearly one million members and more than 10,000 local units, ALA continues to give ‘from the heart’ to promote the Festival. The Auxiliary is the world’s largest womens’ patriotic service organization and plays an important role in the lives of America’s veterans.



This year marks ALA’s sixth year of co-sponsoring Festival. You have seen dedicated ALA volunteers all week, helping at meals, in the hospitality suite, the costume room and other areas of the event, lending a hand and offering

a smile to help the week run smoothly. The Auxiliary also contributes significantly to the competition phase of the program, donating monies, materials, supplies and hospitality items, as well as judging in local competitions.

“It takes tremendous talent, courage and determination to become a finalist in the National Festival,” said ALA National President Carol Van Kirk. “We are truly honored to assist in this tremendous event, and congratulate each and every amazing participant.”

Help Hospitalized Veterans

HHV came into being in 1971, about a year after its founder, Roger Chapin, was visiting wounded Marines at a San Diego Navy hospital. Because time seemed to weigh heavily on them, Chapin asked if there was anything he could do for them. One Marine replied “give me something to do with my hands.” After talking with many hospital staff and patients, the mission of HHV became clear. As Chapin recalls, “as soon as we saw all the smiling faces when the first kits were handed out, we knew we had a winner.” Since its beginning, HHV has distributed more than 20 million craft kits that have brightened and enriched the lives of hospitalized veterans in VA medical centers, state veterans nursing homes and military hospitals worldwide. HHV puts it so well by saying, “Craft kits are not to kill time, but to make time live.”

For 12 years, HHV has been another proud presenter of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. According to Mike Lynch, HHV’s executive director, “The Festival is a powerful and far-reaching vehicle to highlight the diverse creative abilities



VA therapists Suzanne Anders (in red) from the Knoxville, Iowa VA Medical and Jennifer Lewis from the VA Medical Center in Temple, Texas (in light blue) help Festival performers get ready for Sunday’s show.

and achievements of American’s best – our veterans.”

You will also see some of HHV’s craft care specialists here this week, helping veterans benefit from creative expression when working with craft kits and projects of many different types – just as they do each day at VA medical centers around the country. Tonight, HHV will present its annual craft workshop in the Stapleton Room from 7 - 9 p.m. Be sure to stop by and find out what new and creative talents you are hiding!



In the words of Pablo Picasso, “Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.” Many thanks to Help Hospitalized Veterans, the American Legion Auxiliary and the Department of Veterans Affairs, for cleansing our artistic souls and once again enabling this awesome celebration of life through the arts!



Drawing on Family Tradition

Many family members share a special skill, talent or interest, passing them down from one generation to the next. For Ralph Montgomery of Indian Rocks Beach, Fla., the family talent was creative artistry. When his artist grandfather put a pencil into his hand at the age of four, it opened the door to a lifelong passion.

To this day, Montgomery, 71, keeps a sketchbook with him at all times and now he is sharing his talents with his own grandchildren. “My grandchildren are interested in drawing and the seeds are planted,” he said. “We enjoy going out together to draw whenever they visit.”

A newcomer to the Festival, Montgomery entered the local art competition at the Bay Pines VA Medical Center for the third time, winning first place in the art division in the watercolor category for “North Carolina Mill.”

Montgomery served in the U.S. Air Force during the Korean War and was honorably discharged in 1957. Later, he earned a bachelor of architecture degree at the University of Illinois through the GI Bill. His keen eye and talent for drawing served him well throughout a prestigious architectural career.

Montgomery and his wife, Phyllis, lived abroad for 15 years before retiring to Florida in 1990. That year, he was among the western hostages held by the Iraqi regime occupying Kuwait. During his four and a half months of captivity, Montgomery passed the time by making pencil drawings of various copper and brass objects in the apartment where he was staying.

Like many who have been held in captivity or suffered as prisoners of war, it is difficult for Montgomery to talk about his experiences in Kuwait even now. Minimizing

all that he endured, Montgomery believes that many others went through much worse. During the ordeal, he never knew when Saddam Hussein’s troops might come for him; that experience gave him a new perspective on life. His subsequent

treatment at the Bay Pines VA Medical Center and the opportunity to meet other veterans who have endured similar trials have also changed his perspective. According to this talented artist, his experiences have not only influenced his artwork in an emotional way, but have inspired his life in general.

In 2000, Montgomery presented a 30-day, one-man retrospective show of his artwork back home in Indian Rocks Beach. Numbering nearly 150 pieces in various media, the display showcased sketches and paintings completed over a 30-year period, including those very

special pencil drawings from his months in Kuwait.

Montgomery does not normally sell his artwork, choosing instead to share his artistic passion with his children and grandchildren. As he experiences his first trip to the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, Montgomery’s “extended family” members at the event are very glad he has chosen to share his talents with them as well. They also thank Ralph Montgomery’s grandfather for putting that pencil into his hand so very long ago.



Ralph Montgomery from Indian Rocks Beach, Fla.

On the Road Today Leanin’ Tree Museum and Celestial Seasonings Tours

Busses Load	9 a.m. sharp
Museum Tour	11:30 a.m.
Lunch	Noon
Celestial Seasonings Tour	3 p.m.
Busses Load	3 p.m.

Come along with us today to tour this magnificent private collection of western art, and then enjoy an aromatic stroll through the world of Celestial teas, herbs and art.

The **Leanin’ Tree Museum of Western Art** in Boulder exhibits more than 300 original paintings and bronze sculptures from the private collection of Edward P. Trumble, chairman and founder the museum. It is unique in that it is the only major collection of privately held works of American western art that is free and open to the public for viewing.



Walk through **Celestial Seasonings’** art gallery and view original paintings from tea boxes. Also, visit their eclectic collection of Celestial teapots and teacups. While you are there, entertain your taste buds with a wonderful sampling from more than 50 tea varieties. Stroll through the beautiful Celestial herb garden, venture into the “rocking and rolling” factory (where eight million tea bags are produced each day), and finally, enjoy the “Mint Room,” where you will encounter the mind-clearing (and sinus-clearing) power of peppermint and spearmint.





Ten Tips for Great Writing

With creative writing the newest division in the annual creative arts competition and Festival, here are some basic

tips for all you flourishing writers.

1. Write, Write, Write

If you want to be a writer, you've got to actually sit down and write. Set a time for yourself to get down to work, and be firm with yourself when that time comes. Do not let anything stop you.

2. Be Concise

Leave out the long descriptions from your writing – nobody likes to read them. Be concise in your writing.

3. Good Characters

Give your characters quirks and problems and bad habits and friends. There has to be action in your character's life. Avoid flat, uninteresting characters. If they are dull, the story will be dull as well.

4. Use Action Instead of Lecture

In real life, we can learn a lot from lectures. In your writing, however, let the information come through the action and dialogue rather than a lecture. Use action instead.

5. Do Your Research

Even if you are writing fiction, it's important to pepper your story with real facts. Do your research and you will have a better story.

6. Good Grammar, Spelling or Usage

You can have the best story in the world, but if it's full of grammatical mistakes it will be unreadable. If you want to write for a living, then write. If you know you are bad at grammar, spelling and usage, then get a friend to proofread your work before you ever show it to anyone.

7. Be Logical

Illogical or surreal events can ruin a story. Don't have your villain be a character that doesn't pop up until ten pages before the ending. Give clues as you write, build the suspense, let the reader have a chance at guessing the outcome.

8. Believe in Yourself

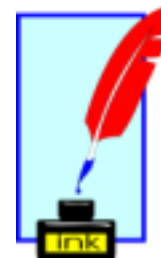
Writing is a very isolating practice. It is very easy to get critical of your own work. Remember that writing is a process. Re-word sentences, move them around, and play with it until it makes more sense and reads more smoothly.

9. Be Positive

When you have a finished piece to show to an agent or editor, don't apologize for anything. Get over it and be positive about your writing.

10. Be Yourself

You have to use your own voice, your own ideas, and your own style when you write. If you please yourself in your writing, your writing is good.



The Rule of Thirds for Painters and Photographers

One of the most popular 'rules' in photography and painting is the Rule of Thirds. It is also popular among artists. It works like this:



Imaginary lines are drawn dividing the image into thirds, both horizontally and vertically. Place important elements of your composition where these lines intersect. (See diagram at left.)

As well as using the intersections, you can arrange areas into bands occupying a third, or place things along the imaginary lines. As you can see, it is fairly simple to implement. Good places to put things are a third of the way up, or a third of the way in from the left – you get the idea.

Using the Rule of Thirds helps produce nicely balanced, easy on the eye pictures or paintings. Also, since you have to position things relative to the edges of the frame, it helps get rid of the *tiny subject surrounded by vast empty space syndrome*.

One last thing about the Rule of Thirds – once you have gotten the hang of the rule, you will very quickly want to break it! This is fine. This concept is to be used as a guideline, and if you can create a better image by bending or ignoring the rule, then fire away – after all, *you* are the artist!





James Taylor smiles for Festival caricaturist, LaVonna King.



American Legion National Commander Tom Bock speaks with Festival dancer Dwayne Scheuneman, from Clearwater, Fla.



Rick Crandall of KEZW radio interviews Liz Mackey, director of the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival, on Wednesday morning.



Rehearsing for the Show



Photos from the Festival



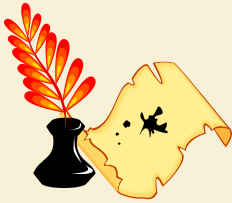
Creative Writing Added to Creative Arts Competition

This year, creative writing became the newest addition to Creative Arts Festival competition. Winning entries are based on the merit of the written work and judged on creative content, message clarity, language, originality of the topic and overall strength. With 19 different categories within the division, creative writing entries include poems, essays, personal experiences, short stories, monologue/duologues, group creative writing, and special recognition. (To highlight this year's first place entries, a special booklet is being published for those writers.)

There are many skilled writers across the country who submitted entries in the new division. In this first year of creative writing, 177 entries were received from 131

veterans. Two of those veterans earned an invitation to attend this week's Festival. Even though creative writing is not generally considered to be a "performance" art, it is welcomed to the Festival this week as invited writers participate in the week's activities and stage show performance.

The writing of James Grey, an Army veteran from Northport, N.Y., will be incorporated into the final stage show on Sunday (in the personal experience, inspirational category). Another talented writer in the personal experience category is Gay Leigh Mundy, of Wauwatosa, Wis. Her piece will also be performed as an individual act in the show.



Costume Change: Wearing Many Hats at the Festival



Maureen Howell of LaCrosse, Wis.

Talent runs deep at the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Some of this year's artists and performers previously recognized for their visual art achievements are now celebrating new victories in the performance arts.

Tom Hollingsworth, 73, from West Jordan, Utah, won two gold medals in two categories in the 2005 national drama competition. Known for his "cowboy poetry," wood art and deep bass voice, Hollingsworth is partici-

pating in several all-cast production numbers this year.

In past Festivals, Hollingsworth participated as an artist for his many wood art entries that earned him four silver medals. Hollingsworth says that his first pocket knife was given to him when he was six years old. "I refined my skills when I was on duty in Vietnam," he said. "To make the time pass by while on downtime, I carved different things for my fellow comrades."

Growing up on a ranch in Oklahoma, Hollingsworth's talent at wood carving is equally matched by his creative and unique poetry. He says that his poems are about life's lessons, and give him a way to teach his children and grandchildren about how to treat others.

Hollingsworth says that coming to the Festival, whether as a performer or an artist, is a great way for him to stay active.

"The Festival helps me keep my mind active and engaged...plus it is a lot of fun," he said. "I'm excited to be in the chorus this year and am grateful to be recognized for both my talents."

Just as appreciative is Maureen Howell, 44, from LaCrosse, Wis. As a child, Howell always wanted to sing in a choir and has been singing in the choir at her church for the past two years. She began working with crafts in the 1980s while she was

hospitalized at the Tomah VA Medical Center. Howell participated in past Festivals with her award winning work in fabric art and glazed ceramics. This year, she claimed two bronze medals in the vocal solo (pop) and vocal group (religious) categories.

"This year, I'm thrilled to be able to be a part of the chorus," said Howell. "Last year, I was so inspired by the stage show performance that I prayed to be a part of it. My prayers were answered and I feel so blessed to be here this week—this is my lucky chance."

Howell and Hollingsworth plan on continuing their involvement in both forms of art, and are grateful for the Festival's healing opportunities.



Tom Hollingsworth of West Jordan, Utah

F - Y - I



Hospitality The hospitality room offers snacks, soft drinks, juices and coffee for all Festival participants, staff and volunteers. Friendly volunteers will welcome you to the room from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. today. It is located on the third floor, rooms 301 and 303.



Medical Suite The medical support team is on the third floor, room 318 and is available 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 your stay here in Denver is the very best.



Meet with Your Team Leader

Meet with your team leader this morning through Friday at 8:30 a.m. Check with your team leader for the location of your meetings. On Saturday, October 22, the team meetings will begin at 9 a.m. On Sunday, October 23, team meetings will begin at 11 a.m.



Today's seminar, "Service Dogs in Action," will be presented by Robin M. Starr, DVM, M.Ed., executive director of Freedom Service Dogs, Inc. She will present information on how dogs rescued from shelters can be trained to assist persons with disabilities. "Baxter Blond," an Animal Planet pet star, will demonstrate service dog tasks. You will also learn that service dogs not only provide improvements in mobility, confidence and social interaction, but can also facilitate painting and photography! Please join us in the National Room (Atrium Level) at 7:30 p.m.



Mostly Sunny
High 68°
Low 46°

NVCAF WEB SITE
www.creativeartsfestival.org

Would you like your friends and family back home to be able to see what you are doing this week? Log onto the Festival Web site to check out the daily editions of the *ArtsGram* (on the main home page) as well as individual news releases and photos, located on the "Participant Information" tab.



Thursday, October 20, 2005

Breakfast - Traditional Continental

Denver Scrambled Skillet
Assorted Bagels with Cream Cheese
Fruit and Berries
Muffins, Pastries, Croissants, Danish
Butter, Margarine and Preserves
Oatmeal, Cold Cereal, Yogurt
Juices, Milk, Soy Milk, Coffee, Hot Tea,
Cream, Sugar, Sugar Substitute

Lunch - Performers Only, Harvest Buffet

Renaissance Salad
Herb Crusted Chicken, Pacific Red Snapper
Seasoned Mashed Potatoes
Ciabatta Bread
Cinnamon Gelato, Flourless Chocolate Cake
Coffee, Milk, Hot Tea, Iced Tea
Cream, Sugar, Sugar Substitute

Dinner - South of the Border

Lime & Shrimp Salad, Tortilla Chips & Salsa
Rice and Beans, Beef Fajita Bar
Chicken & Green Chile Enchiladas
Caramel Flan with Fresh Berries
Cinnamon Churros
Tropical Blend Iced Tea, Limeade
Coffee, Milk, Hot Tea, Iced Tea
Cream, Sugar, Sugar Substitute

I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream for Ice Cream!

Remember the old fashioned ice cream social? Our gracious hosts from the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System are offering some special treats for everyone this evening in Ballrooms A & B, from 8 to 10 p.m. Featuring four flavors of Ben & Jerry's homemade ice cream, the frozen delicacy is just one of several highlights tonight, the others being an opportunity for caricatures as well as karaoke. Stop on by for a flavorful, artistic and melodious time!

(In case you are wondering, the ice cream flavors are vanilla, chocolate chip cookie dough, chocolate fudge brownie and sugar free cherry — something for everyone!)





Schedule for Thursday, October 20, 2005

7 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel
– Ballrooms C, D

8 a.m. Team leaders meet with Katy Ryan
– Stapleton Room, Atrium Level

8:30 a.m. Team leaders meet with artists

9 a.m. – 11 p.m. Hospitality Room Open
Rooms 301 and 303, 3rd Floor

9 a.m. Load Buses

9:30 – 11:30 a.m. Depart for Leanin’ Tree Museum of Western Art and Sculpture Garden in Boulder, Colo.

Noon – 3 p.m. Lunch and tour of Celestial Seasonings in Boulder

3 p.m. Load buses and depart for hotel

5:30 – 6:45 p.m. Dinner at hotel – Ballrooms C, D

7 – 9 p.m. Art Workshop #3
– HHV craft workshop for performers & artists
– Stapleton Room, Atrium Level

7:30 – 9:30 p.m. “Freedom Service Dogs”
CEU Session (Staff)
– National Room, Atrium Level

8 – 10 p.m. Ice Cream Social/Caricaturist
– Ballrooms A, B

9 – 11 p.m. Karaoke and Talent/Social time at hotel
– Ballrooms A, B

7 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel – Ballrooms C, D

8:00 a.m. Team leaders meet with Amy Kimbler Performing Arts Assoc.
– O’Hare Room, Ballroom Level

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

9 – 11:00 p.m. Hospitality Room Open
– Rooms 301 and 303, 3rd Floor

9 a.m. Load and set up at Gates Concert Hall – Production staff only

9 – Noon Complete Run-thru in show order including chorus numbers
– EVERYONE NEEDED
– Ballrooms A, B

Noon Lunch at hotel – Ballrooms C, D

1 – 2:30 p.m. Chorus Number Rehearsal with music director – Ballrooms A, B

2:30 p.m. Music Director and production staff leave for theatre

3 - 4 p.m. Vocal soloists for Star Spangled Banner and Veterans rehearse
– Fred and Jerry
– Ballrooms A, B

3 - 4 p.m. Man of La Mancha - singers and dancers - practice with Amy
– O’Hare Room

4 - 5 p.m. Afternoon at the Ball Game - everyone in this skit rehearse with Amy – O’Hare Room

5:30 – 6:45 p.m. Dinner at hotel
– Ballrooms C, D

7 – 9 p.m. HHV craft workshop for performers and artists
– Stapleton Room, Atrium Level

7 p.m. Dry Tech at theater
– only production staff needed

7 - 9 p.m. Tentative - small group of individual numbers needing extra rehearsal practice with assistant directors - we will post these if needed
– O’Hare Room

7:30 – 9:30 p.m. “Freedom Service Dogs”
CEU Session (Staff)
– National Room, Atrium Level

8 – 10 p.m. Ice Cream Social/Caricaturist
– Ballrooms A, B

9 – 11 p.m. Karaoke and Talent/Social time at hotel
– Ballrooms A, B

