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Final Report
For Fiscal Year 2007
(July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007)

Submitted to the
Minnesota State Arts Board
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BRENDA FLINTROP, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

111 2nd Avenue NE, Waseca, MN 56093
(800) 298-1254 or (507) 833-8721
plrac@hickorytech.net - www.plrac.org

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council is a group of dedicated professionals committed to supporting, nurturing and expanding the arts; knowing that the arts improve the quality of life in our region. Our purpose is to provide promotion, technical and developmental assistance and grants to non-profit arts organizations, community groups, schools and individual artists. The nine counties served are: Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Nicollet, Martin, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan.

CORE VALUES

We value: Open Mindedness, Equality of All Art Disciplines, Promotion of Artistic Excellence, Accessibility to the Arts, Availability to Our Constituents, and Maximization of Constituents' Potential.

REGIONAL UPDATE

In the past population shifts have affected the availability of funding for arts experiences, since a major component of the regional funding, and the RAC Forum funding formula, is based on population. The 2000 Census Data identified 222,790 people living in the Region 9 area. This was only a 3% growth rate since the 1990 census. The nine-county area we serve is Blue Earth, Brown, Faribault, LeSueur, Martin, Nicollet, Sibley, Waseca and Watonwan. Blue Earth County remains the most populated county in the region with 55,941 residents. No other county has more than 30,000 people. The least populated county is Watonwan with 11,876 people. Mankato is the largest central city in the region with a population of 32,427. Three cities with populations over 10,000 include: Fairmont (10,889), New Ulm (13,594) and North Mankato (11,798). Two communities approaching this size include St. Peter (9,747) and Waseca (9,611). Four mid-size towns having populations ranging from 3,500 – 4,600 are St. James, LeSueur, Blue Earth and Sleepy Eye. The majority of other small towns range in size from 250 – 2,500 on average.

Small towns tend to focus on local events at the school, sporting events, and community concerts and plays. Many of the arts organizations in the region have been serving their communities for years. Thus, they may have received grants from the regional arts council for several years. Some arts activities are concentrated in the population hub cities of Mankato, North Mankato and St. Peter. However, many art organizations and community groups in out lying towns are sponsoring arts events.

In assessing the number and types of art projects funded it is evident that several art disciplines are served more with our state funded grants. In Region Nine we are fortunate to have a large variety of musical organizations and activities, both vocal and instrumental. This represents the largest art discipline we review and fund through grant applications (about 50%). In a given year, the board will review about 85-90 applications. Theater performances compose about 20% of all funded activities and so do visual art projects and exhibitions, at 20%. Dance and literature projects are less common and represent about 5% each. Under-served areas continue to be dance, literature, media art and ethnic music and dance.

Several trends in the region have affected the availability of arts experiences for the residents. Small communities face obstacles as they struggle to improve their quality of life through the arts. There is a lack of recognition for existing arts organizations and difficulty in building an audience; there are only a few adequate facilities for performances and exhibits; limited public and private funding; lower family income; limited awareness of opportunities outside the community; and limited access to high quality, culturally diverse arts experiences due to lengthy travel time and lack of public transportation.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As defined in the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council's Biennial Plan for FY 2006 and 2007, the council's goals are identified in three categories: service, program and grants. The service goal is to increase the visibility of the arts and to ensure proper use of state and foundation funding in the region by encouraging citizen participation, providing technical assistance, planning, public information and administrative assistance. The program goal is to provide information and education to the council to help them address their own development. The grants goal is to provide a variety of funding opportunities which will promote artistic growth opportunities, organizational development, and exposure to quality arts experiences.

I. Service Goal

- A. To encourage participation through an active arts council. The Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council Board held nine meetings in FY 2007. Our annual meeting was held in August 2006. Board members continue to advocate for state arts funding by contacting their local legislators throughout the year. Several board members and staff attended Arts Advocacy Day at the State Capitol in March 2007. Board members are familiar with arts activities in their community and county and are required to attend several PLRAC funded activities each year.
- B. To provide assistance to local arts organizations and artists to help them reach their goals. Brenda Flintrop, the Executive Director of Prairie Lakes provided technical assistance to several arts organizations and community groups for grant writing and organizational development throughout the year. Although many groups are becoming more structured, efficient and professional, some are experiencing board burn out, reduction in volunteers and economic decline in their communities. Small communities are losing businesses and jobs which affects participation and funding for arts activities. Several groups needed staff assistance regarding developing arts programs, coordination of activities within a community and formalizing their organizational structure.

In August 2006 Flintrop facilitated a Grant Writing Workshop for Artists; discussing the PLRAC/McKnight Individual Artist Grants for \$1,000. The PLRAC artist workshops encourage artists to make their first ever grant application. The personal interaction with artists enables them to understand how important it is to describe a project which will advance their career and professionalism. Also, the project must be completed within a year. A majority of applicants who attend a workshop, or seek staff technical assistance are successful in obtaining a grant. Flintrop also presented a Grant Writing Workshop for non-profit arts organizations & community groups in August 2006 for organizations applying for fall Art Project and PLRAC/McKnight Capital grants.

We see our artist grant programs as a stepping stone to other grant opportunities for our artists. Through my seventeen years as a regional arts council director, I've stayed in contact with many of these artists and continue to encourage them in their careers. Over the years several artists who received grants through the regional arts council have pursued grants with the MN State Arts Board and other foundations.

We utilize only McKnight funding to focus on the needs of our individual artists. In FY 2007 Prairie Lakes staff collaborated with VSA Arts of MN to provide arts meetings for people with disabilities in Nov. 2006, Jan. and March 2007 in Mankato; and coordinated with MN Citizens for the Arts to host the presentation of the Artist Economic Impact Survey results in March 2007.

- C. To provide arts information to the general public. The printed quarterly newsletter was discontinued in FY 2004, due to budget cuts. It still is an excellent tool to communicate with our constituents, and therefore we have continued to create a newsletter, but it is only posted on our website. We have created an email database of constituents which is used to notify them that a new newsletter is posted. The simplified newsletter includes general information about the council, PLRAC grant programs and recipients, and local arts calendar of events. It also includes a form for groups to submit information for the arts calendar. The newsletters can be viewed on our website at www.plrac.org and the Summer/July 2007 Newsletter is included. (Attachment 1) The council is committed to increasing publicity for arts organizations. As noted above, grantees are included in the quarterly newsletter and by news releases submitted to the local media. The printed quarterly newsletter was discontinued. However, one printed newsletter was possible in July courtesy of an Insty Prints Grant, which was available to local non-profit groups. We were very pleased with this donation and our constituents were also very grateful.

After the fall and spring Art Project Grant Rounds we organize a photo session for grantees. Photos are sent to each group's local news paper announcing the grant award and other media also receive the news release. This has proven to be very successful. Many small town newspapers have included the photograph and grantees clip the newspaper article and photograph and send them to Prairie Lakes with their Final Report Form.

Staff has continued to update the entire mailing list, which is about 1630. In July 2006 we again asked constituents to send us their email addresses, so we could keep in touch with them and also let them know when we post future newsletters. There is a separate database of artists and arts organizations, schools and teacher contacts. The database for each of these categories is currently at: 430 Arts Organizations and Community Groups; 900 Artists; and 300 Schools. A printed version is available upon request to constituents. Staff has responded to many calls for program information and assisted people in locating other statewide arts funding agencies and resources.

- D. To provide fiscal and program accountability to the State Legislature and the Minnesota State Arts Board. The FY 2006 – 07 Biennial Plan was submitted to the MSAB on 5/15/05. A Final Report for FY 2006 was submitted 9/28/06. Financial reports are prepared using the QuickBooks program and reviewed at board meetings. Our operating expenses are broken down into program and general support expenses and we have a chart of accounts that identifies State and McKnight revenue and expenses. The audit for FY 2007 will be available in October 2007 from Meulebroeck, Tauber & Co., Pipestone. An un-audited financial statement dated 6/30/07 is included. (Attachment 5) All state funds are encumbered as grants and are listed as an Accounts Payable.

II. Program Goal

- A. To provide information to the arts council for grant review and design of future programs and services for the local artists and arts organizations. Prairie Lakes conducts a needs assessment every four years to provide an accurate and comprehensive understanding of the characteristics of the region, as they relate to the arts, and to identify needs and problems that may be addressed by our regional arts council. We conducted our Needs Assessment Survey in November 2004.
- B. To assess grant funding and organizations served. In assessing the number and types of art projects funded it is evident that several art disciplines are served more with state funded grants. In Region Nine we are fortunate to have a large variety of musical organizations and activities,

both vocal and instrumental. This represents the largest art discipline we review and fund through grant applications (about 50%). Theater and visual art activities exist but are less available in all communities. In a given year, the board will review over 100 applications and theater and visual art projects each represent about 15-20% of the total. Dance and literature projects are less common and represent about 5% each. Under-served areas continue to be dance, literature, media art and ethnic music and dance. Grant maximums have been reduced in the Art Project Grant Program from \$2,700 to \$2,000 since 2004. The board philosophy is that the maximum needs to remain at \$2,000 in order to equitably fund the 45-50 applicants that normally apply in this grant round. With decreased state funding the board has responded by reducing general administrative expenses, reducing the grant programs and eliminating the printed quarterly newsletter.

Summary of state funding for Prairie Lakes Regional Art Council:

FY 1999 - \$216,758	FY 2002 - \$208,170	FY 2004 & 2005 - \$142,442
FY 2000 & 2001 - \$213,612	FY 2003 - \$199,844	FY 2006 & 2007 - \$143,175

In FY 2007 Prairie Lakes awarded 84 grants for a total of \$101,580 (State funds \$67,010 & McKnight \$34,570). The grants ranged in size from \$150 - \$2,000; and about 36% of those activities focused on youth. Art Project grants \$64,080; Small Arts and Arts-In-Education \$13,500; McKnight/PLRAC Capital \$4,500; McKnight/PLRAC Operating Support \$10,500; and McKnight/PLRAC Artist Grants \$9,000.

- C. To complete a needs assessment survey of arts organizations, community groups and artists. A total of 1017 surveys were sent out to individual artists, arts organizations and community groups that produce or sponsor arts activities in the nine county area. Using the current Prairie Lakes Arts Council database, 800 Artist Surveys were sent and 104 were returned (13% response). A total of 217 organization surveys were sent and 44 were returned (20% response). As an incentive for returning the survey Prairie Lakes offered gift certificates for artists and organizations. All surveys returned were put into two separate drawings to receive the certificates. Artists could win a \$25 gift certificate to an art supply store (6 @ \$25 each) and organizations could win a \$50 publicity certificate to a local newspaper (3 @ \$50 each).

Of the groups responding to the organization survey, 40% identified themselves as an arts organization and 39% as a community group. A majority of the organizations have been in existence for over 20 years (56%), while only 18% are under 10 years old. Regarding their activities, 23% produce their own events, 25% sponsor or present an event and 41% of the organizations do both producing and sponsoring of arts activities. Arts Organizations and Community Groups were asked if the reduced state funding to PLRAC and its programs had affected their organization; 66% responded yes and 27% responded no. How it affected them was broken down into categories. Primarily organizations said they will have to increase: membership/registration fees 32%, ticket prices 27%, and other 9% (a variety of items were listed). Reductions were more varied and are listed below. **The organizations said they had to reduce:**

- ◆ Publicity 30%
- ◆ Programming 18%
- ◆ Pay to director, organist, etc. 16%
- ◆ Number of performances 14%
- ◆ Scholarships 14%
- ◆ Other (items listed) 14%
- ◆ Classes 7%
- ◆ Staff 7%

Organizations were asked which grant programs/services they participated in and those ranking the highest were: 64% Sponsorship/Production Art Project, 18% Small Arts Project, 11% Arts-In-

Education, 11% McKnight Art Project, 14% McKnight Capital, and 16% PLRAC Newsletter. The Operating Support grant was discontinued a couple years ago, but when asked 64% noted that it would help their organization and should be re-instated, along with 39% expressing support for a new Community Arts Education Partnership grant between schools and local arts organizations.

Organizations were asked what additional needs they have (frequent, occasional or no need) for a variety of development topics: Promotion and Marketing, Board & Volunteer Needs, Activity Planning, Coordination with other Organizations, and Technical Assistance. **A majority of those responding said they Occasionally Needed assistance with all of these topics.** Those listed as frequently needed, which seemed significant were: 55% increase audiences, 41% seeking business donations, 39% fundraising projects, 32% increasing earned income, 23% co-sponsoring events, 20% grant writing and 20% working with the media.

They were also asked what are the main obstacles to arts development in our region and the top five items were: 18% Insufficient public awareness regarding the positive economic effects of arts on a community, 15% Lack of public awareness as to the necessity of the arts in all our lives, 13% Insufficient foundation and corporate funding in the region, 12% The current economic situation of our region and local communities, and 11% Shortage of media coverage, local, regional and statewide.

New information was gathered on this survey regarding the use of the internet to obtain information. With the reduction in state funding we have relied more on the internet as a method to contact organizations and provide them with updated information. Although 84% said they had access to the internet and 73% have an email account, only 30% go on-line daily, 20% weekly and 20% monthly. Of those responding to the survey 66% have visited our website, 54% have downloaded an application form, but only 32% have looked at our on-line newsletter.

The Artist Survey provides valuable background information regarding artists' discipline, years of experience and training, exhibition and sales in the area. The level of participation in PLRAC sponsored programs and services were very good. About 59% of the artists responding to the survey said they've participated in the Regional Juried Art Exhibition, 23% in the Individual Arts Project Grant Program and 24% in a PLRAC grant writing workshop. Many artists also added comments on their survey form regarding suggestions for the regional art exhibition, reinstating a printed copy of the newsletter, and expressed positive support and praise for PLRAC's past efforts for artists.

Of the artists responding, 46% identified themselves as an emerging artist, 27% an established professional artist, and 22% hobbyist. Of those responding, 71% were female, 52% were age 40-59, and 33% were arts educators. The discipline breakdown was: 73% visual art, 10% music, 4% literature, 1% dance and 8% other. Artists supported the continuance of the regional art exhibition, artist project grants and workshops. Workshop topics that ranked the highest include 36% exhibition opportunities, 18% personal promotional skills-marketing, 18% creating a website and 16% grant writing.

New information was gathered on this survey regarding the use of the internet to obtain information. With the reduction in state funding we have relied more on the internet as a method to contact artists and provide them with updated information. Although 82% said they had access to the internet and 71% have an email account, only 47% go on-line daily (which is a higher percentage than the organizations), 23% weekly and 10% monthly. Of those responding to the

survey 42% have visited our website, but only 33% have looked at our on-line newsletter, also only 13% have downloaded an application form.

III. Grants Goal

- A. To encourage all forms of art in the region. The council supported a variety of arts activities and art disciplines with grants in FY 2007. Copies of the grant guidelines and applications for the three state funded programs are attached. (Attachments 2-4)

In FY 2007 Prairie Lakes awarded 84 grants for a total of \$101,580 (State funds \$67,010 & McKnight \$34,570). The grants ranged in size from \$150 - \$2,000; and about 36% of those activities focused on youth. Art Project grants \$64,080; Small Arts and Arts-In-Education \$13,500; McKnight/PLRAC Capital \$4,500; McKnight/PLRAC Operating Support \$10,500; and McKnight/PLRAC Artist Grants \$9,000.

The data collection information on these grants was electronically transferred to the MN State Arts Board. The number of organizations participating in the councils grant programs is very steady from year to year. The arts organizations we work with in region nine are very stable with only a very few discontinuing programming or ceasing to exist. However, their growth is limited and primarily they continue similar programs.

A majority of arts activity in our region is music, both instrumental and vocal. Therefore about 50% of the grants awarded by PLRAC represent this discipline. Theater and visual art activities are the next most active and thus receive funding. For the last several years now community education, 4-H groups and libraries have sponsored and coordinated more youth art activities. Children's theater is very popular and several community education departments have sponsored Prairie Fire Children's Theater of Barrett, MN to present a children's play with local children.

For several years the board has addressed funding both established arts organizations and new activities. Therefore, in order to spread the funds out more and fund more arts activities and organizations the board has placed maximums on all grant programs and also recommends partial funding of grants, in some programs, as necessary. In general, the quality of arts activities presented in grant applications in our region is very high.

PLRAC/McKnight Operating Support Grant. This was a new program in FY 2007 and grants could be used to maintain on-going programs, services, facilities, utilities, personnel and administrative costs. Operating Support Grants of \$1,500 each were awarded to seven organizations, for a total of \$10,500. Eleven organizations applied for funding; and it was unfortunate that we did not have enough funds to fund all of them. Our arts organizations really need and appreciate this program. This type of grant helps to sustain the organization and allow them to have part-time staff. We only have a few organizations in our region that can afford to have staff, primarily they are all volunteer organizations. An added highlight was to fund the participation of our Operating Support Grantees at two non-profit workshops on Marketing and Board Governance in Mankato, organized by the MN Council of Non Profits, Southern MN Chapter. Prairie Lakes paid their registration fee and a small mileage stipend if they lived outside of Mankato; and staff also participated. This took a lot of staff time to coordinate, but very worthwhile for the organizations to participate in and staff will be following up with these organizations in FY 2008.

Ten Percent for Children Legislation. Under Objective A. of the Grant's Goal - we acknowledge that we funded arts programs intended primarily for children with our state funds. Although currently the state does not require that 10% of state funds will be distributed for this purpose, we have continued to document the number of grants and the amount awarded. From the lists below you will note that the symbol "♦" is noted behind the grant amount awarded for each organization that primarily benefits children. **Included in the state grants funded are 34 organizations/projects focusing on youth participation, totaling \$36,956.** We received \$143,175 in FY 2007 and 10% represents \$14,317. Therefore, we can still document that more than 10% of our state funds benefit youth. The youth activities that were funded focused on a variety of disciplines and activities including dance classes and performances, music classes and performances (both vocal and instrumental), children's theater, visual art classes; and artist residencies in the schools and field-trips to arts activities.

- B. To seek additional arts funding. Seeking additional funding was a priority this year and we successfully applied for and received grants to partially fund our 15th Annual Regional Art Exhibition in May 2007. Grants were received from the NorAm/Minnegasco Foundation, Mankato; Prairie Ecology Bus Center, Lakefield; and Carl & Verna Schmidt Foundation, Rochester. We continue to receive funding from the McKnight Foundation, Minneapolis and administered the following grant programs: Capital, Art Project, Operating Support and Individual Artist Project Grants, for a total of \$34,570. We prepare separate Final Reports for each private foundation. The McKnight Foundation is the only other source of re-grant funds. A full description of the exhibition is listed after C.
- C. To promote and fund rural arts activities in all of the region's communities. The council is sensitive to the needs of our established and emerging arts organizations. Several new arts groups, community groups and schools applied to our programs this year and several were funded.

15th Annual Prairie Lakes Regional Juried Art Exhibition

The 15th Annual Exhibition was held at the Carnegie Art Center, 120 S. Broad, Mankato; from May 2 – June 14, 2007. Overall, we estimate that about 900 people viewed the exhibition at the Carnegie Art Center in Mankato during the 6 week exhibition. This juried exhibit is an opportunity for emerging and established artists to display their work in a professional setting. As a result of our art exhibition artists are contacted by local art centers to exhibit their work in the future and by the public to purchase their work.

A total of 200 works of art were submitted for the exhibition. The jurors selected 99 pieces for display. About 190 people attended the opening reception from 1–3 p.m. on Sunday, May 20, 2007. Cash Awards of \$1,300 were presented to artists. Cash Awards included: 1st Place - \$200 and 2nd – 6th were \$150, \$125, \$100 \$75 and \$50 respectively. The eleven Merit Award Winners received \$50 each, and the People's Choice Award received \$50. It should be noted that award winners selected by the judges reflect the diversity of artwork submitted ranging from acrylic, oil and watercolor paintings, drawings and photography to ceramics and sculpture. Award winner's names are listed in the Art Exhibition Brochure, which is enclosed.

Five pieces of artwork were purchased totaling \$700, with funding from the Carl & Verna Schmidt Foundation and Prairie Ecology Bus Center; and were donated to the Arts Center of St. Peter for their permanent art collection. A representative of the art center assisted in making the selections. Funds were cut by the NorAm/Minnegasco Foundation in 2007 and therefore there were no purchase awards to the Waseca Art Center this year. We had to reduce expenses by 30%

this year due to this reduction. This was detrimental to the exhibition this year and we hope that full funding will be awarded in 2008.

Bus stipends to local schools to attend the art exhibition were available in 2007 using Minnegasco funds. About 400 students and teachers toured the exhibition using the bus stipends and we estimate another 100 students from the Mankato area viewed the exhibit on their own. Nine schools requested information, but some of them ran into scheduling difficulties within the school and restrictions on doing any field-trips. It takes a lot of staff time to contact schools and coordinate these tours, but they are very beneficial to students and teachers. Six schools from four different towns attended the exhibition and received bus stipends in May 2007. The principal and teachers were informed that this was a self-guided tour and they are required to bring several chaperones. Volunteers at the Carnegie Art Center provide a welcoming host, general overview of their facility and a brief summary of the regional art exhibition noting that it is a competitive show, which is judged and the top artists receive cash awards. The six schools which received bus stipends were:

1. LeCenter High School (*40 students, grades 9-12*)
2. LeCenter Elementary School (*52 students, grade 5*)
3. Madelia Elementary School (*46 students, grade 5*)
4. Madelia High School (*45 students, grades 9-12*)
5. St. Paul's Lutheran School (*29 students, grades 3-8*)
6. Waseca Intermediate School (*135 students, grade 5, three separate tours*)

The Carnegie Art Center is paid a stipend for the use of their building and assistance in coordinating the exhibit. They also provide the experienced staff needed to hang the exhibit which can be very difficult, given the large number of works which must be displayed. Their art center volunteers also provide their time for the public viewing hours, Wednesday thru Saturday 1-4 p.m. and Thursday 1-7 p.m.

We pay two professional artists to judge the exhibition. They spend about seven hours reviewing the artwork and selecting the work to be displayed and those that will receive awards. The jurors comments on the exhibition were "In viewing the 200 entries from the 9 county area, we were impressed by the eclectic sampling of techniques, concepts and processes. Skill and ingenuity was evident, as various media were used to depict an array of subject matter, from rural scenes and contemporary issues, to metaphor and humor. We believe that this work will engage and inspire the viewer; it is a strong representative voice of the local creative community, in the larger global creative conversation."

The jurors were Susan Boeckmann, Minneapolis and Max Schollett, St. Paul. Susan is an artist and Arts Educator who earned a BFA from the University of Missouri and Studio Art Centers, International in Florence, Italy. She has been a Minneapolis College of Art and Design Continuing Studies Faculty member for three years and in 2003-2004 was an Artist in Residence at Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts, concluding her cycle with an exhibition of over 30 new works in drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, mixed media and installation created during her tenure there. Susan teaches art to all ages at White Bear Art Center, Bloomington Art Center, Hopkins Center for the Arts, Banfill-Locke Center for the Arts, Phipps Center for the Arts, and the Minneapolis Institute of Arts; and has been a juror for a variety of exhibitions. Max Schollett received a BFA in Painting from Minnesota State University, Mankato in 1998 and will receive his MFA in 2007 in Painting and Drawing from the University of Minnesota. He was a Graduate Instructor in Drawing and a Teaching Assistant for several art classes including sculpture and

visual concepts. In 2003-04 Max was an Adjunct Art Instructor at Ridgewater College, Hutchinson and assisted with exhibits at the college gallery. He has exhibited his work in southern Minnesota and the Twin Cities.

Publicity included: news releases to all media in our nine county area; television promotion through "Community Update" on KEYC-TV, North Mankato; and two paid ads in Applauze and Centered magazines, Mankato. The free news releases sent to all media in the nine-county area has proved very successful for past art exhibitions. The Mankato Free Press article on 5/17/07 was also very good this year and they highlighted and interviewed two artists in the exhibit; and put on link on the Free Press website to view a slide show of artists work. Entry forms were sent to over 650 visual artists in our nine county region. **This exhibition is another tangible example of the many talented visual artists in our area and it represents the artistic diversity and quality of our rural artists.** We will continue to highlight the regional exhibition and the award winners in our newsletter and on our website, www.plrac.org.

FY 2007 Grantees: 84 grants totaling \$101,580

Art Project Grantees - \$64,080 (\$53,510 State & \$10,570 McKnight funds)

<u>Art Project Grants awarded in October 2006</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Amount Awarded</u>
Arts Center of St. Peter	Nicollet	\$2,000
Bothy Folk Club	Watonwan	\$2,000
Dance Conservatory of S. MN, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000 ♦youth
Fairmont Opera House	Martin	\$2,000
Good Cooks Dance Company, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$1,145
Mankato Area 77 Lancers	Blue Earth	\$2,000 ♦youth
Mankato Area Riverblenders Chorus	Nicollet	\$1,800
Mankato Figure Skating Club	Blue Earth	\$2,000 ♦youth
Mankato Symphony Orchestra	Blue Earth	\$1,500 ♦youth
MN State Univ., Mankato, Dept. of Music	Blue Earth	\$1,800
MN Valley Chorale, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000
Musicorum, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000
Nicollet Public Schools	Nicollet	\$2,000 ♦youth
Saint Peter Choral Society	Nicollet	\$2,000
Waseca Arts Council	Waseca	\$2,000
Waseca Chorale	Waseca	\$2,000
Waseca High School Jazz Festival	Waseca	\$2,000 ♦youth

Art Project Grants awarded in April 2007

Arts & Heritage Center, Montgomery	LeSueur	\$1,635
Betsy-Tacy Society, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000 ♦youth
City of St. Peter, the Bridge art crawl	Nicollet	\$2,000
DreamsWork, Lifeworks Services, N. Mankato	Nicollet	\$2,000
Good Thunder Reading Series, MSU, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000
Mankato Area Youth Symphony Orchestra	Blue Earth	\$2,000 ♦youth
Mankato Children's Chorus	Blue Earth	\$2,000 ♦youth
Merely Players Community Theatre, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000
MN Over 60 Band, Gaylord	Sibley	\$2,000
New Prague Czech Singers	LeSueur	\$ 900
New Ulm Suzuki School of Music	Brown	\$2,000 ♦youth

Project G.E.M., Lake Crystal	Blue Earth	\$2,000 ♦youth
Rock Bend Folk Festival, St. Peter	Nicollet	\$2,000
SMILES, Ctr. For Independent Living, Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000
South Central Service Cooperative, North Mankato	Blue Earth	\$2,000
Waseca Community Education	Waseca	\$2,000 ♦youth
Waseca County Historical Society	Waseca	\$1,500

Small Arts and Arts-In-Education Grants – Awarded by County \$13,500

Blue Earth County - \$1,952

Lake Crystal Wellcome Memorial School (AIE) \$500 ♦youth
 Maple River Elementary School (AIE) \$452 ♦youth
 Maple River High School (AIE) \$500 ♦youth
 Mankato Municipal Band (SA) \$500

Brown County - \$1,500

Healthy Communities/Healthy Youth: New Ulm (SA) \$500 ♦youth
 Monument Brass Ensemble (SA) \$500
 New Ulm Actors Community Theater (SA) \$500

Faribault County - \$1,500

Blue Earth Community Education (SA) \$500 ♦youth
 Blue Earth Valley Quilters (SA) \$500
 KEE Civic Theatre, Kiester (SA) \$500 ♦youth

LeSueur County - \$1,000

LeCenter Elementary School (AIE) \$500 ♦youth
 LeSueur-Henderson Youth Opportunities (SA) \$500 ♦youth

Martin County - \$1,000

Fairmont Community Education (SA) \$500 ♦youth
 Red Rock Center for the Arts (SA) \$500

Nicollet County - \$2,746

Govenaires Drum & Bugle Corps (SA) \$500
 Lafayette Public Charter School (SA) \$500 ♦youth
 MN Valley Music Teachers Assoc. (SA) \$500 ♦youth
 Nicollet County Historical Society (SA) \$271
 St. Peter Chautauqua Assembly (SA) \$475
 St. Peter Community & Family Educ. (SA) \$500 ♦youth

Sibley County - \$1,152

City of Arlington, community band (SA) \$500
 Gaylord Public Library (SA) \$500 ♦youth
 Sibley County 4-H (SA) \$152 ♦youth

Waseca County - \$1,650

Waseca Chamber of Commerce (SA) \$500
 Waseca Community Education (SA) \$500 ♦youth
 Waseca Regional Library (SA) \$150 ♦youth
 Waseca Jr. and HS Choirs (AIE) \$500 ♦youth

Watonwan County - \$1,000

Madelia Area Chamber of Commerce (SA) \$500

Madelia Community Theater (SA) \$500 ♦youth

PLRAC/McKnight Capital Grants (4 grants awarded – total \$4,500)

Fairmont Opera House - \$1,500. To purchase lighting instruments for the stage.

Mankato Area 77 Lancers - \$948. To purchase a bariton horn for the brass section of the band.

Mankato Area Arts Council - \$1,350. To purchase track lighting and fixtures for the Carnegie Art Center's main rotunda gallery.

New Ulm Suzuki School of Music - \$702. To purchase music stands and a storage rack for the organizations rehearsal and performances by the youth orchestra.

PLRAC/McKnight Operating Support Grants (7 grants awarded – total \$10,500)

Arts and Heritage Center, Montgomery, \$1,500. Funds would be used for the organization to become fiscally independent by becoming a 501©3 organization and to hire a part-time coordinator to work with the financial aspect of their activities, fundraising and advertising to help bring them to a new level.

Arts Center of Saint Peter, \$1,500. Funds would be used towards the salaries of their professional staff; Gallery and performing Arts Coordinator and Education Consultant.

Fairmont Opera House, \$1,500. Funds would be used for maintaining youth programming and utilities.

Mankato Area Arts Council, \$1,500. Funds would be used to accomplish fundraising goals for the next fiscal year by upgrading their FileMaker Pro software and provide the Development Director's monthly stipend to update the membership, gift shop artists and donor database.

Mankato Children's Chorus, \$1,500. Funds would be used to continue the funding of the organization's new General Manager position.

Mankato Suzuki School of Music, \$1,500. Funds would be used to re-create the co-director position and pay the piano lead teacher for her administrative work; pay for continuing education for the new instructors and pay for rent increase for next year.

Project G.E.M., Lake Crystal, \$1,500. Funds will be used for Director's salary of the Creative After Thoughts expansion program; upgrade of computer software and Director workshops for improvement of the program services.

PLRAC/McKnight Individual Artist Grants (10 grants awarded – total \$9,000)

Patrick Dentinger, North Mankato - \$1,000. To purchase supplies to create, mat and frame new drawings, paintings and photography for a future exhibit; as well as create a new artist web site.

Debra Evans-Paige, LeSueur - \$1,000. To purchase a small electric kiln to fire porcelain and precious metal clay to create new jewelry pieces; to be exhibited in several locations.

Erin Gergen Halls, Mankato - \$1,000. To purchase supplies to mat and frame 13 pieces of colored pencil art work; also to document the art work for her portfolio. The art work will be displayed at Art Center of Saint Peter July 12-Aug. 19, 2007.

Desiree Goettlicher, Mankato - \$1,000. To attend the Wild West Arts Club National Convention and receive professional coaching for skill development in trick and fancy roping as well as whip cracking in Claremore, Oklahoma in April 2007. She also intends to develop a historical character, Lucille Mulhall, the first woman to be called cow-girl; for presentation at historical and old west events.

Svitlana Panchenko, LeCenter - \$1,000. To attend a workshop and purchase supplies to create new oil paintings and also mat and frame the artwork, for an exhibit in New Prague and Hutchinson in 2007.

Pat Rosenow, St. Peter - \$500. To create a video program to be shown on public access cable stations in the area that highlights musical artists at the Rock Bend Folk Festival, St. Peter in a musical montage of these artists performances mixed with the atmosphere of the festival.

Ann Rosenquist Fee, Mankato - \$1,000. To produce record quality readings of three of her short stories, promote these recordings, perform at an open mic "StorySLAM" in Los Angeles, CA and participate in a mentorship with Joyce Maynard, a spoken word artist.

Susan Shanklin, Mankato - \$1,000. To purchase a ring saw and supplies to create a stained glass art window for public display at the Theresa House Shelter in Mankato.

Monica Sturm, New Ulm - \$1,000. To attend a Knitter's Convention in Santa Clara, CA in Feb. 2008; and learn new finishing techniques and other non-conventional materials used by other knitters. She plans to enter her work at the MN State Fair.

Karrey Tweten, North Mankato - \$500. To pay for editing costs of her manuscript "The Other Side of Crazy".

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF GRANTS

In order to monitor and evaluate the grants for the year, a two step process of payment is involved for the Art Project grant program. Eighty percent of the grant is paid to each grantee one month prior to their event. Once the project is completed and the Final Report is submitted and approved, the final 20% is paid. The Small Arts and Arts-In-Education grants are paid in full to each grantee one month prior to their event. The McKnight/PLRAC Capital, Operating Support, and Individual Artist Grantees also receive 80% upon receipt of their contract. When the Final Report is submitted and approved, the final 20% is paid.

Grantees are instructed in their contract letter that any significant changes must be reported promptly, and that permission for changes or extensions must be requested through the Executive Director. If the changes represent a major change in direction for the project, the Executive Director will bring the request before the council for approval. Grantees are required to file a final report with the council 60 days after completing their projects. Final reports are reviewed and approved by the Executive Director if no discrepancies are noted. If discrepancies exist, the director will notify the executive committee and/or full board. Final reports are always available for review by council members, and may be brought to regular meetings for review. Board members and staff who have attended funded projects report on them at monthly meetings.

The Executive Director periodically reviews the grant files to see whether organizations have outstanding final reports. Should an overdue report be indicated, the Executive Director sends a reminder letter to the grantee. The staff sends additional letters or makes calls as needed to close the files of completed projects. Grantees are reminded of the responsibilities they share with the council for full accountability of public funds. If the Final Report is more than 6 months overdue the board has the authority to deny the final 20% payment. The contract with the grantee also states "If after an additional six months the final report has still not been submitted to the PLRAC, the organization will not be considered for funding for two years from the completion date of the project."

STAFFING

Executive Director: Brenda Flintrop, employed 18 years as Arts Council Director
Administrative Assistant: Cindy Lewer, employed 12 years as Admin. Assistant/Bookkeeper

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Blue Earth County	Rachael Hanel, Madison Lake
Brown County	Sandra Walworth, Springfield
Faribault County	Nancy Willette, Winnebago - Secretary
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Watonwan County	Gloria Eager, Madelia
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City of Mankato	Kevin Kroeber - President
City of New Ulm	Ann Nelson
City of North Mankato	Pat Potzler