



Friday, October 26, 2007

Welcome Back!

This year, 112 veterans are attending the 2007 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. Of those, around 50 have attended the event in previous years. Today, we introduce you to some of our “veteran” artists and performers.



Patrick Haskett of Steilacoom, Wash.

Visual artist Patrick Haskett of Steilacoom, Wash., is no stranger to art or the Festival. Interested in painting since age eight, Haskett served as an artist while he was in the Army. The 2007 Festival is his fifth gold medal since 1996. According to Haskett, coming to the Festival offers him a great opportunity to meet other veterans and visit cities he has never seen before. Haskett has won gold medals in watercolor, experimental photography, and, in 2007, graphic art, or more specifically, “original copper plate dry point etching.” This year’s piece involved a 400-year-old technique and imported Italian paper, ink that cost \$80 an ounce, and a tool that came from a Jaguar racecar.

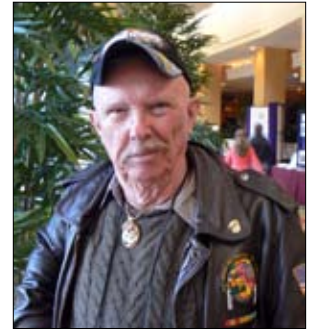
Another repeat artist is knitter Michael Galante, who lives on the Kenai peninsula of Alaska. Galante’s first Festival was in 2005 in Denver. His exquisite art is more beautiful when you know that Galante taught himself to knit after he’d broken several bones in his hands and frostbitten fingers. Galante’s journey to the Festival the past two years involved a painful recovery and a determination to get there – literally. Last year, he walked for days to get to the bus station that got him to the airport that got him to South Dakota. Talk about an incredible journey!



Michael Galante of Anchorage, Alaska.

Ronald “Doc” Ross of Palisade, Colo., is back this week for his fifth Festival. A medic in the Marine Corps during the Vietnam War, Ross used his

skills in photography to earn his previous four gold medals. This year though, he entered a story he had written about a corpsman that was part of his VA therapy. Now, he finds himself with a new group of veterans at the event – the performers! Ross will be part of the chorus on Sunday and he looked forward to a totally different Festival experience this time, leaving the art workshops behind and entering the world of auditions and rehearsals.



Ronald “Doc” Ross of Palisade, Colo.

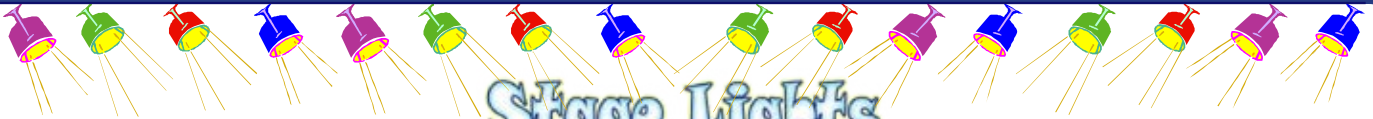
No stranger to the stage, Millicent Ceaser of El Paso, Texas, danced her way to her third Festival since 2003. Her gold medal is in the patriotic dance category and she dedicated her piece, “A Hero for Today,” to her father, who passed away last year. Ceaser said the Festival is “one of the most well-organized and friendliest” events she has ever attended. She should know – Ceaser danced in the Army Soldier Show at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta and has also performed in dance festivals across the country.

Another dancer – and singer, and videographer – is Rick Stang of Sartell, Minn. He’s lost count of how many Festivals he’s been to, but his best guess is 13 or 14. Stang has a long and varied Festival resumé: vocal groups and duets, wheelchair dances in groups and pairs, and multimedia presentations. While he’s auditioned for and earned several solos at previous Festivals, 2007 marks a first for Stang – his first “pure solo” as he will sing his gold medal piece, “Right on the Money” in Sunday’s stage show.



Rick Stang of Sartell, Minn.

These are just a few of our repeat participants this year, but there are many others. Be sure to meet them – as well as our many newcomers – before you leave St. Louis!

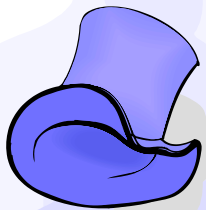


Stage Lights

Captivating Your Audience

There is one trait that almost all audiences have in common – they want to have fun! A crowd reacts to a performer, and the performer to a crowd, but the performers are the ones in charge. They are, therefore, in the position of making sure that everyone is having a good time. The key is to having fun yourself. When on-stage, have a great time – even if everything is not going perfectly.

Always make eye contact with everyone on the stage and smile. With such a fun vibe on-stage, the audience can't help feeling the same way. When you are performing, it is your party. Just remember, everyone's invited!



When performing in front of an audience, it is imperative to captivate their interests. There are so many ways to lose them. No matter how good you sound, if you have a lot of dead space

in between acts you'll lose momentum. That can give the audience a reason to tune out.

There are several things you can do to prepare your show, ensuring a smooth set from beginning to end. As you re-

hearse, make yourself a set list and you will not have "on-stage" decisions to make about things like what movement or music should be next.



Another important thing is to make sure the set list works. It is important that songs vary in key and tempo, several songs in the same key, one after the other, can tire the listener's ear. Tempo or groove variances can be tricky. Be careful where you place slow songs. Start and end each set "up tempo." Generally, right in the middle, depending on the type of performance, is a good place to slow things down for two or three songs. However, be sure to pick it up again because too many slow songs will put folks to sleep.

Of course that won't be a problem at Sunday's show – there are way too many outstanding acts among us!

Lights, Camera, Action!

In many ways, it's hard to believe that today will only be the fourth day of rehearsal for those performing in Sunday's stage show! Perhaps even more astonishing is that tonight is our first dress rehearsal. It's always an exciting night as we visit the theater for the first time and start to see how the entire show fits together – the flow of the various acts, where and when you come on-stage (and where you go once you get there), and take a look at the costumes and all the activity that takes place backstage.

Performers – you don't want to miss any of it so be ready! Your team leaders will give you all the details, but basically,



be ready to board the buses after lunch – the first bus leaves the hotel at 12:30 p.m. and the second at 12:45 p.m. The tech rehearsal takes place from 1:15 – 5 p.m. for all performers. Chorus numbers will go first, and chorus members may go back to the hotel when those numbers are

finished. Rehearsals for the individual acts will follow. After dinner at the hotel, all performers will return to the theater at 6 p.m. for the dress rehearsal, which takes place from approximately 7:15 until 10 p.m.

Dress rehearsals can make for a long day and evening, so you might want to bring along something to do (reading, knitting, etc.) for the periods when you are not on-stage. It is very important that you are available when it's your time to be on, so you'll need to be aware of what is taking place. Since you may return to the hotel rather late, prepare for a big day.

Dress rehearsal is an exciting, yet very important, piece in this relatively quick process that is the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. With everyone's cooperation and attentiveness, it will go smoothly and be a memorable day for all.

See you at the theater!!



“Show Me” Missouri ... Gateway to Greatness for Two Explorers



Along today’s shoreline of the Missouri and Columbia Rivers, the landscape has probably changed a lot since William Clark and Meriwether Lewis set out to prove that the

Pacific Ocean could be reached by traveling along either of these two rivers. Little did either of them know that the mission President Thomas Jefferson set before them would have the impact that it did. Reaching far beyond its original purpose, it enhanced the culture and trade, and provided some of the greatest adventure stories in history.

The expedition began in May 1804, as these two relatively unknown explorers stepped from the banks of the Missouri River into a prominent position in American history books. Facing harsh conditions, unknown types of people and unexplored lands, Lewis and Clark made detailed reports on geography, climate, plants and animals, and studied the customs and languages of the native inhabitants.

Through rough river navigation and fierce windstorms, and fighting wildlife unfamiliar to them, the expedition survived enormous challenges to arrive at the Pacific Ocean in November 1805.

On March 23, 1806 the explorers started back up the Columbia River and on September 23 of that same year, the expedition ar-



rived in St. Louis after covering 8,000 miles of territory over a period of two years, four months and nine days.

The contributions of the Lewis and Clark expedition to 1800s society are too numerous to recount, but the records kept from this journey continue to provide great insight into today’s society. Contributions from the expedition include new information about the land and its natural resources,



as well as its native people. Perhaps the single most important discovery along the trail was the width of the Rocky Mountains,

William Clark and Meriwether Lewis led the famous Lewis and Clark Expedition that began in May 1804.

which destroyed hope for Jefferson’s easy connection between the Missouri and Columbia Rivers.

Following the expedition, Lewis was appointed Governor of the Upper Louisiana Territory where he served until his untimely death in 1809 from gunshot wounds incurred while traveling to Washington D.C. Clark served the remainder of his career in public service being appointed Governor of Missouri Territory, and later Superintendent of Indian Affairs until he died of natural causes in St. Louis in 1838.

Music Director Spins His Way Across Country

Bill Haworth, music director for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival since 1993, cycled his way across the country this summer literally from sea to shining sea.

After dipping his rear wheel in the ocean May 1 in San Diego, Calif., Haworth set his sight on the East Coast to wet the front one. Through 100-degree days, sometimes filled with hail and rain, four flat tires and sore muscles that comes from cycling steep terrain, Haworth didn’t lose sight of achieving his goal of reaching the shores on Virginia Beach.

“I’ve always had a spirit for adventure and this is one of those things I’ve always wanted to do,” Haworth said. “After

the first few days of muscle aches I became one with the bike. This is probably the best shape I’ve ever been in before.”

Haworth completed his undergraduate degree at Indiana University and joined the U.S. Army Band in Washington, D.C. His many accomplishments include playing with the National Symphony, Kennedy Center Orchestra, National Ballet Orchestra. He toured



See “Spin” cont’d on page 4

Festival Performers Get Ready for Another Great Show



As audience members get to their seats, nervous but excited performers prepare backstage for their moment in the spotlight. They have waited all week – and all year – to perform their award winning pieces for this year’s Festival and the moment is almost here. The stage show performance will commence at 2 p.m. on Sunday, directly following the art exhibit at the beautiful Touhill Performing Arts Center.

Giving away all the secrets would ruin the surprises that music director Bill Haworth, and stage show co-directors Jennifer Lewis and Suzanne Anderson have in store for us, but a few sneak peaks never hurt anyone, right?

Star of Hollywood’s Golden Era, Jane Powell will once again grace us with her presence as Mistress of Ceremonies. We are so pleased Jane is back again this year, for the ninth time. Her heartfelt comments and love for veterans makes her an ideal candidate for such an exciting evening. Several VA and sponsor leaders will also be joining us on Sunday. Michael J. Kussman M.D., Under Secretary for Health and Lisette M. Mondello, Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs, will be joining us. Jan Pulvermacher-Ryan, national president for ALA, and Mike Lynch, executive director of HHV will also be there. Also joining us in the audience will be artist Suzanne Nicholson, wife of former Secretary Jim Nicholson.

Some Festival favorites are back again! Look for those hand-clapping, toe-tapping classics to be even brighter and more exciting than in previous years. Also, watch for some new acting roles on stage. We’ve enlisted the help of several veterans to portray village people in the piece “Toreador,” from the opera Carmen.

Another new addition to the limelight this year is a dance piece “If You,” performed by Dwayne Scheuneman from Dunedin, Fla., and partner Amie Fishinger. Accompanying these talented dancers is soloist Ray Klem and backup singer Christine Pointer from Florida, Carla Renee from Washington, D.C., and Art Lee from Woods Cross, Utah, singing “Oh Child, Things are Gonna Get Easier.” Of course Festival newcomer Rudy Camancho and his partner Darlyn Phillips cut a rug up on stage. They will perform their special recognition award winning piece entitled, “Walkin’ to New Orleans.”

Each and every veteran who is here in St. Louis this week has worked tirelessly to make sure this year’s performance is a show stopper and the art exhibit is awe inspiring. We thank you for your service to this country and your wonderful contributions to the creative arts. Good luck!



“Spin,” cont’d from page 3

with Henry Mancini, Johnny Mathis, Michael Crawford, Mel Torme, Milton Berle, Jack Jones and Patti Page. Having this deep history in music, one would expect Haworth took some tunes to accompany him on his 44-day journey to help keep the pace. But he said he couldn’t afford that luxury.

“Road riding is a very intense sport,” he said. “I spent just as much time peering in my rear view mirror as I did ahead of me. This ride took constant attention and exhausting concentration. I really had to keep my audio senses aware of the road and traffic around me so there was no music to accompany me.”

Haworth did take two breaks. He stopped in St. Louis for a Festival site visit and then again in Kentucky for a short stop to rent a car and drive to visit his parents in Ohio. Then it was back to the road, and the bike.

“I’m not sure I would do it again, but I never say never,” he said. “One thing for sure, it was a very anticlimactic trip home. I left Norfolk at 1 p.m. and landed in San Diego seven hours later. Really a quick trip when you think about the 44 days before.”



Festival Music Director Bill Haworth prepares for rehearsal.



Al Johnson, 2006 Festival Host site coordinator, is ensnared in a wire tube at the City Museum. Did he make the great escape? Al Eckman caught the shot as he followed him down the tube.



Kenny Wayne from Yarnell, Ariz., studies one of the sculptures in the "Chapungu: Nature, Man, and Myth" exhibit at the Missouri Botanic Garden.



The complete Festival chorus in rehearsal.



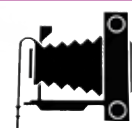
Suede Davenport from Aurora, Ill., displays his singing talent during rehearsals.



Members of "Forest Park" group meet on Thursday morning to discuss the day's schedule.



Photos with Jane Powell will be taken Friday morning from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the Renaissance Ballroom on the 12th floor.





HHV Craft Workshop is Today!



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

While visiting wounded Marines in a Navy hospital, the founder of Help Hospitalized Veterans (HHV) learned that many asked for something to help pass the time and the idea of craft kits was born. According to the HHV Web site, "Craft kits are not to kill time, but to make time." Today, HHV has delivered more than 20 million craft kits to veterans and active duty military personnel. Craft care specialists employed by HHV are located in many VA medical centers, helping to include arts and crafts activities into the overall treatment plans for veterans. So what, you may ask, does arts and crafts do for you?

According to HHV, arts and crafts activities improve

feelings of self worth and self esteem. They improve physical functioning of both fine and gross motor skills. Working on crafts promotes independence, improves social interaction and teaches new skills. It also provides an opportunity to creatively express yourself. Many current and former participants in the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival got their start through a craft care kit. One is Jacqueline Bowens, a National Guard veteran from Country Club Hills, Ill., who won first place this year in the string art kit category. "The Creative Arts Festival provided me with an opportunity to share something that has become my lifesaver," said Bowens. "Being hospitalized for an illness exposed me to the craft program, and what a blessing in disguise that was." It was a craft care specialist from HHV who first introduced Bowens to crafts during her hospital stay. "The arts are very therapeutic and I discovered my gifts and artistic talent from the crafts provided by HHV."

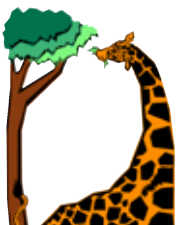
Come on and get crafty – come to the HHV's annual craft workshop this morning from 9 – 11:30 a.m. in the hotel's Penthouse Ballroom on the 12th floor. It's always a



Come to the Zoo!

Join us today as we explore the St. Louis Zoo. Located in Forest Park, it is the third largest zoo in the country with 90 acres of space and 700 species of animals on exhibit. The zoo, which was built on the grounds of the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904, opened in 1913. It was one of the first zoos in the world to exhibit animals in naturalistic settings and remains one of the few free zoos in the country.

- Some of the zoo's favorites are its Asian elephants. Raja is the proud father of daughter Maliha born last summer, and four-month-old Jade. (Their home is in the River Edge Park area.)



- The newest exhibit is Fragile Forest, an outdoor habitat complete with flowing streams and waterfalls. Chimpanzees and orangutans enjoy this lush jungle home.
- No visit to the zoo is complete without a stop in big cat country, home to tigers,

leopards and other large cats. Big cat country is found in the Red Rock, where you'll also find zebras, giraffes and antelopes.



- Finally, if you are interested in a little nostalgia, stroll through Historic Hill, where you will find architecture reminiscent of the 1920s. This is the home of the primates, birds, reptiles and one of the few original structures remaining from the World's Fair, the 1904 Flight Cage.

Buses will depart from the hotel at 1:15 p.m. and tour the zoo from 1:30 – 4 p.m. (Participants will receive critter cash for use at the zoo.) You can use that for the zoo line, a 20-minute narrated train ride through the zoo. Critter cash can also be used for snacks, the entrance fee to special exhibits or feeding the animals.

Enjoy this trip on the wild side at the St. Louis Zoo!

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Hospitality

The hospitality room volunteers are ready to welcome you with warm

smiles and a variety of snacks and refreshments. All hospitality room locations are on the 12th floor of the hotel.

Location	Day	Hours
Renaissance Ballroom	Friday	9 a.m. - Midnight
Renaissance Ballroom	Saturday	9 a.m. - 11 p.m.
Boardroom	Sunday	10 a.m. - Noon

Medical Suite

The Medical Suite is located in Lindbergh A & B.

Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Medical Suite phone number inside the Renaissance Hotel: extensions 4025/4026

Outside of the Renaissance Hotel: (314) 450-0299

After 10 p.m., call (314) 450-0299 for emergencies.

Participants, please inform your team leader of any medical concerns, so your team leader can help you contact the Medical Room. Medical personnel will be wearing red T-shirts and will accompany veterans and support personnel on all trips away from the hotel.

INTERNET CAFE

HP (Hewlett Packard) is running an Internet café for your use during the week of the Festival.

Hours of operation today through Saturday, October 27:

7 - 8:30 a.m

11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

7 - 9 p.m. (except for Saturday)

It is located in the Truman Room on the main floor of the hotel.



Rainy
High 50°
Low 46°



for Friday,
October 26, 2007

Meals will be served in Grand Ballrooms C&D unless otherwise designated.

Breakfast: 7 - 8:30 a.m.

Lunch: 11:30 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Dinner: 5 - 6:45 p.m.

Breakfast

Fruit Smoothies

Fresh Baked Scones and Croissants

Scrambled Eggs, Skillet Potatoes

Oatmeal with Raisins and Brown Sugar

Cheese Blintzes with Fresh Berry Compote

Chilled Assorted Juices, Coffee, Hot Tea

Lunch

Caesar Salad with Garlic croutons and Shaved Parmesan
Marinated Relish Tray

Baked Pennne Bolognese, Vegetarian Lasagna

Steamed Broccoli & Cauliflower

Sauteed Italian Sausage with Caramelized Onions

Garlic Bread, Strawberry Cream Layer Cake

Iced Tea, Lemonade, Coffee, Hot Tea

Dinner

Coleslaw, Fried Chicken

Cornmeal Breaded Catfish

Macaroni and Cheese

Spicy Oven Browned Potatoes, Green Beans

Cheddar Buttermilk Biscuits, Apple Pie

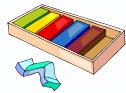
Iced Tea, Coffee, Hot Tea

Leatherworking

7 - 9:30 p.m. Penthouse Ballroom, 12th floor

Leather, which is one of our oldest canvases, will close the workshops this year. Join Jim Koerber from the Tandy Leather Company for a class focusing on leather craft tooling. We are excited to present this unique project for this workshop, one that will be immediately usable and easily finished in the time allotted.





Artists



Performers



Friday, October 26, 2007

7 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel – Grand Ballrooms C&D
 8 a.m. Team leaders meet with Katy Ryan – Ladue
 8:30 a.m. Team leaders meet with artists
 9 a.m. – Midnight Hospitality Room Open
 – Renaissance Ballroom, 12th Floor
 9 – 10:30 a.m. Integrated Dance Workshop – Lambert A&B
 9 – 11:30 a.m. Art Workshop #3 – HHV Craft Workshop
 – Penthouse Ballroom, 12th Floor
 1 – 11:30 a.m. Photos with Jane Powell
 – Renaissance Ballroom, 12th Floor
 11:30 – 12:45 p.m. Lunch at hotel - Grand Ballrooms C&D
 1 p.m. Board buses for tour – St. Louis Zoo
 1:15 p.m. Depart for tour
 1:30 p.m. Tour the St. Louis Zoo
 4 p.m. Board buses and return to hotel
 5 – 6:45 p.m. Dinner at hotel – Grand Ballrooms C&D
 7 – 9:30 p.m. Art Workshop #4 – Leatherwork
 – Penthouse Ballroom, 12th Floor

7 – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at hotel – Grand Ballrooms C&D
 8 a.m. Team leaders meet with Amy Kimbler
 – Gatwick A&B
 8:30 a.m. Team leaders meet with performers
 9 a.m. – Midnight Hospitality Room Open
 – Renaissance Ballroom, 12th Floor
 9 – 10:30 a.m. Integrated Dance Workshop – Lambert A&B
 9 – 11:30 a.m. Art Workshop #3 – HHV Craft Workshop
 – Penthouse Ballroom, 12th Floor
 10 – 11:30 a.m. Photos with Jane Powell
 – Renaissance Ballroom, 12th Floor
 11:30 – 12:45 p.m. Lunch at hotel - Grand Ballrooms C&D
 12:15 & 12:45 p.m. Buses depart for theater (first bus leaves at 12:15,
 and second bus leaves at 12:45)
 1:15 – 5 p.m. Tech rehearsal at Touhill Performing Arts
 Center – All performers – all chorus numbers
 will be run first and then individual acts
 – chorus only participants will be able to go
 back to hotel when chorus numbers
 are finished
 4:45 – 5:45 p.m. Dinner at hotel – Grand Ballrooms C&D
 5:45 & 6:15 p.m. Buses depart for theater (first bus leaves at
 5:45, and second bus leaves at 6:15)
 6:15 – 6:50 p.m. Performers into costume - NO white shirt
 needed; NO make-up; sound check
 for orchestra
 7:15 – 10 p.m. Dress rehearsal with orchestra for
 all performers
 10 p.m. Depart for hotel

Please check with your team leader or the posted schedule outside of Grand Ballrooms A & B for any changes or updates to your daily schedule.



Veterans History Project interviews conclude today, so get them recorded today. To sign up, go directly to the VHP interview room in the Gateway Room on the first floor of the hotel.

NVCAP Web site
www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov

The Festival Web site is your tool to keep your friends and family “in the loop” this week. Don’t hesitate to share it! The ArtsGram is posted there daily as well as participant news releases and photos. Visit www.creativeartsfestival.va.gov for all the latest news.