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Seldovia Arts Council makes it happen!

by Mary Glover



Recently, we had a house guest who was talking about a performer he had the great pleasure of hearing in Colorado and he asked me, "Have you ever heard of George Winston?" Much to his surprise, I was able to say "Yes!" Actually, George Winston was one of the Seldovia Arts Council's first performers in 1999. Needless to say, this puts Seldovia on the map in the entertainment world! Having personally hosted many of the artists in our home, I can honestly say these performers love to come to Seldovia. They love Seldovia's friendly people. They love the beautiful scenery. Some of them are on the road, in motel rooms, eating restaurant or fast-foods. Then they come to Seldovia and get a reprieve from their routines! I have not met one of them who did not want to come back! We have met some truly amazing people who have greatly enriched our lives!

The **Seldovia Arts Council**, as we know it today, is comprised of a handful of active members who bring educational and entertaining artists and performers to Seldovia for the enjoyment and benefit to the community. Seldovia Arts Council Chairperson, Susan Mumma, is the council's talent scout. Susan has done a most remarkable job researching the various groups and individuals for presentation at the Seldovia Arts Council's meetings. The members then decide who and if we can bring a particular act to Seldovia. Darlene Crawford has been the Treasurer since 1999 and she provides the financial documents to support the grant writing. Mary Webber takes an active roll as Secretary and creating many of the posters and cards for the tables at the local restaurants to publicize the events. Susan Zerwick is a major help with many of the events, is the publicity person, and co-director during festival time. Mary Glover documents the events with her camera and is the webmaster for the council. This documentation is used for grant preparation. There are others who often help and we appreciate all the collective efforts in order to accomplish the tasks. Ms. Mumma is also the person who writes the grants and submits them to the following organizations for monetary support.

The entities listed below have generously donated funds through grants to the Seldovia Arts Council:

Seldovia Arts Council's report from Local Arts Agencies Today: Creativity, Community Connections

by Susan Mumma

September 16, 17 and 18th Seldovia Arts Council Chairperson, Susan Mumma, participated in a statewide conference which took place in Juneau, Alaska. This event was hosted by the Juneau Arts and Humanities Council. It was sponsored by the Alaska State Council on the Arts and the Rasmuson Foundation. The intent of the conference, *Local Arts Agencies Today: Creativity, Community, Connections*, was to allow networking between the various community arts councils and boards and to refresh the group's enthusiasm toward effective arts leadership. The group explored the history of arts organizations nationwide and new paradigms for local arts agencies today. They were asked to consider the true mission of the arts in each of their communities. Facilitators of the event were Maryo Ewell, author of "The Arts in the Small Community" and Barbara Schaeffer-Bacon, co-director of Animating Democracy. Among the attendees were Directors of the Alaska State Council, Charlotte Fox, Saunders McNeill, and Andea Noble, Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Alaska State Council on the Arts, Ben Brown, Victoria Lord of the Rasmuson Foundation, volunteer board members and paid staff who serve in leadership capacity in local community arts organizations state-wide.

The emphasis the conference was to help build new paradigms in arts management and to encourage each Alaskan group to continue to expand its mission into the roots of the community, through its arts programs, schools, libraries, local cultural organizations, services and social clubs, communications and media. Huge ideas were presented in which arts play a dynamic roll in shaping democracy and changing the creative face of America. Then practical methods to achieved these goals (even the



1) Alaska State Council on the Arts

2) Rasmuson Foundation (Harper Arts Touring Fund)



3) Western States Arts Federation (Westaf)



If it was not for these three organizations named above, we could not bring the quality of performers and teachers to Seldovia. At this time, WE WISH TO THANK YOU (the Alaska State Council on the Arts, The Rasmuson Foundation, and the Western States Arts Federation) FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

The Seldovia Arts Council is a non-profit organization established by a non-code ordinance as part of the City of Seldovia in 1984. "Our mission is to sponsor and encourage cultural and educational activities in the communities of Seldovia, Alaska, and the south side of Kachemak Bay." "Our focus is to provide quality arts events and arts education through performances, art workshops and education for all ages." Although the Seldovia Arts Council is a separate organization, we work with and encourage co-sponsorship by other local organizations such as the Seldovia Boys & Girls Club, the Seldovia Village Tribe, the Susan B. English School, and the Seldovia Chamber of Commerce. The Seldovia Arts Council was active in its 1984 beginning; however an ebb of its existence happened. The current members (mentioned in paragraph 1 above) resurrected it in 1999.

Since 1999, the Seldovia Arts Council has sponsored 84 major events. This translates to an average of 9 per year, with 6 events being the smallest number in 2003 and two years hosting 14 events. However, the two years that had the most number of events were in 1999 and 2000, the first two years. The Summer Solstice Music Festival did not debut until 2001. The Summer Solstice Music Festival is a major summer event and brings many fantastic musicians to Seldovia at one time. It also is a lot of work! In 2007 we have hosted a total of 9 events with one yet to come.

The final event this year curtains on October 30th at 7:00 PM at SBE School with the Mongolian Throat Singers of Tuva: Hunn-Hurr-Tu. You don't want to miss this event as I understand that these throat singers can make two different sounds at once! It is going to be a once in a lifetime event for us. Think about this: the majority of the world will never get to hear these sounds! In addition to their singing, they will be bringing their unique instruments from Tibet.

smallest community) were explored. The groups shared ideas and methods and cheered each others successes.

Barbara Schaeffer-Bacon emphasized the goals of each arts agency through the lens of Americans for the Arts, a leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With a 40-year record of service, it is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. The thrust of the talk was best summarized by the mission statement of *Animating Democracy*:

"Animating Democracy, a program of Americans for the Arts Institute for Community Development and the Arts, fosters arts and cultural activity that encourages and enhances civic engagement and dialogue. It is based on the premise that democracy is animated when an informed public is engaged in the issues affecting people's daily lives. The arts and humanities can contribute unique programs, settings, and creative approaches that reach new and diverse participants, stimulate public dialogue about civic issues, and inspire action to make change."

The state of the arts represents the health of the community. It represents creative excellence. It represents the best of our city spaces and public buildings. It links the arts to the economy through creative design in product development and business plans. In a nutshell, a healthy, thriving economy is partnered by a healthy sense of its arts.

The Seldovia City Office will be mailing its water bills out the first week of October. Look for your opportunity to be an active member or an inactive member, or a supporter of the Seldovia Arts Council with the [Membership Application Form](#). Currently we are planning the events for 2008. A broad showing of monetary support is very welcome and we can also use more people to help with the events, even if you have only one hour to donate... or as much as your entire life!!!! (Guaranteed to resolve any boredom issues!)

The Membership Application Form is also on the Seldovia Arts Council website. You need not be a resident of Seldovia to be a member or a supporter. If you are a member, you will be added to the email list and you will receive updates on the council's happenings. If you are a visitor to Seldovia, plan to visit our community during one of the scheduled event times listed on the website. If you are a resident of Seldovia, plan to attend all the events. You will not be disappointed!

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