

Arts and Culture

“The arts are nothing less than the expression of our lives. It is the arts that describe our humanity.”

— Sally Baird, Chair,
Community Foundation of the Ozarks 2008

With vision, leadership and service, the arts and cultural opportunities in Springfield and Greene County have grown at a steady pace, offering new experiences to the community as well as continuing annual traditions. Education and regional outreach have become essential and powerful ways to communicate the importance and viability of arts and culture.

From a continued audience of thousands at First Friday Art Walk to the creation of the new Springfield Shakespeare Festival in Jordan Valley Park, it is hard to question the economic impact of arts and culture to downtown Springfield. Due to such successful growth, a concentrated effort towards sustainability has taken center stage.

BLUE RIBBONS (2004 – 2007)

- Collaborative Efforts
- Quality and Attendance
- Facilities

Springfield Arts Related Facilities

- Gillioz Theatre
- The Creamery Arts Center
- Drury University’s Pool Arts Center
- Evangel University’s Barnett Fine Arts Center
- History Museum for Springfield and Greene County
- Juanita K. Hammons Hall for the Performing Arts,
Missouri State University
- Landers Theatre
- Moxie Cinema
- Springfield Art Museum
- The Skinny Improv Comedy Theatre
- Vandivort Center Theatre

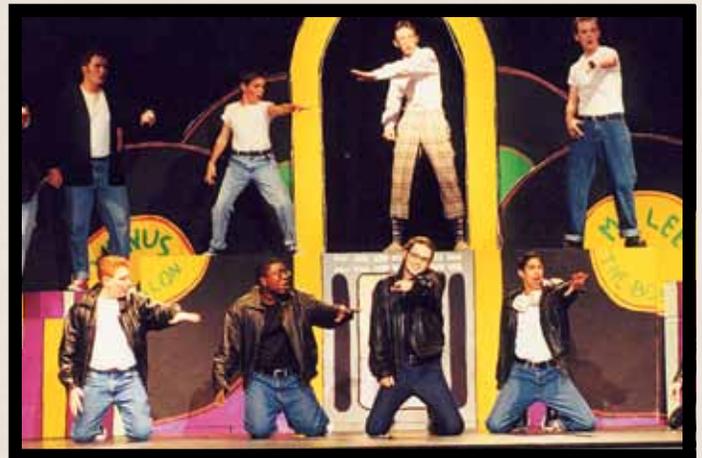
CURRENT STATUS OF 2004 – 2007 RED FLAGS

Operating Revenues and Funding

Funding for arts and cultural organizations has been a red flag highlighted in all previous *Community Focus* reports. To improve the quality of life in Springfield, consistent and sustainable funding is needed. However, according to the 2005 and 2007 *Community Focus* reports, the majority of arts and cultural organizations were not able to fully reach their missions because they relied heavily on volunteers, few paid staff and irregular forms of support.

In response to funding needs, the Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative was developed as one of the 2008-2009 Board Goals of the Community Foundation of the Ozarks. It addresses funding issues by working with organizations in growing their individual endowment through planned giving strategies.

Although operating revenue and funding has continued to be an issue due to the economic downturn, a majority of arts and culture organizations have found creative ways to find new sources of revenue. For example, organizations such as the Springfield Ballet, Springfield Symphony, Springfield Regional Opera and Missouri Film Alliance have explored new programming, endowments, fundraisers and use of web services to solicit new sources of income. Two new theatre organizations, Swan Repertory Theatre and Poor Thespian Productions, have emerged to provide live classical and accessible theatre opportunities. The Springfield Regional Arts Council more than tripled its membership by creating special categories for individual artists, children and military families. In addition, the Council also purchased a 16-foot box truck for member organizations to use to cut costs in transporting sets, props and instruments.



Stage production at Juanita K. Hammons Hall for the Performing Arts

Human Resources

The 2007 *Community Focus* report identified the need for area arts organizations to share staff to directly reduce the financial burdens on organizations and their sponsors and donors indirectly. As recommended, arts and culture organizations have worked to share human resources as a consistent way of cutting overhead costs.

The implementation of the Arts Programming Sustainability Initiative in February 2009 has provided a shared staff member, the Arts Sustainability Coordinator. This position focuses on establishing an endowment for arts sustainability through the creation of a collaborative festival, assisting with growth of each organization’s existing endowment, enhancing and coordinating educational efforts related to the arts, and increasing the public’s

awareness of the arts as being vital to the quality of life in this community. Additionally, the Springfield Regional Arts Council (SRAC) shares its finance director with over 6 groups, the Arts Council's front desk receptionist serves as shared staff for all organizations represented at The Creamery Arts Center, and the Springfield Little Theatre has shared its Costume Coordinator and Technical Directors with The Creamery. The benefits to organizations sharing human resources has provided savings for all and represents a level of cooperation growing between groups, which did not previously exist.

Regional Outreach

In 2007, the *Community Focus* report advocated the need to increase the frequency of regional performances, workshops and shows in order to increase cultural tourism for Springfield. To date, educational outreach in rural communities has seen tremendous growth. Organizations such as the Springfield Symphony and Springfield Little Theatre have increased performances in regional centers and schools. In addition, programs from the Springfield Regional Arts Council such as the GOAT (Greater Ozarks Art Tour), Vincent Van GOAT, Artist in Residence and the Claymobile (in partnership with Springfield Pottery) have reached over 40,000 in regional communities. The first traveling regional show for visual artists took place in Spring 2009 around the 27-county southwest region, culminating in a collaborative show at The Creamery Arts Center.

Three years ago, Community Foundation of the Ozarks began a program called the Ozarks Plateau Initiative, with private donor support and in collaboration with Mid-America Arts Alliance, to bring both visual and performance arts programming to rural communities. That program was also partially supported last year through the addition of Missouri Arts Council funding. Additional partnerships like this are needed in arts programming in order to meet the goals for regional outreach.

The Springfield Regional Arts Council is the only Arts Council in Missouri with an extensive regional focus, covering over 27 counties in southwest Missouri. As all arts organizations

Springfield Art Museum



Walnut Street Artsfest

(including the SRAC) continue to increase their focus on regional cultural efforts, challenges include keeping a current and comprehensive database of regional contacts as well as finding sustainable funding for regional tours and educational performances.

EMERGING ISSUES

Audience Development

Due to the growing number of new performance venues, galleries, studios and organizations, attention to building new audience members is essential. Efforts towards audience development need to include increased cross-promotion amongst organizations and continued educational outreach efforts to local and rural communities and schools.

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2007-08
Arts and Cultural Organizations	43	49	50	56
Museums	3	4	7	9
Local Arts Festivals and Events	12	14	19	56

Sustainable Funding

With the current economic climate and ever-changing cultural trends, concentration on sustainable funding for arts and cultural institutions is a must. Collaborative development campaigns to maintain historic facilities and planned giving strategies are currently being put in place to address this emerging issue. However, the development of new non-traditional and in-kind revenue sources will need to be identified and sought.