

**Rurals Gathering Notes: 2008 NYS ARTS Summit**

Proctors Theater, Schenectady

September 25th, 2008

**Attending:** Anne Ackerson (consultant); Brett Bossard (CAP of Tompkins County); Amie Brockway, Beth Sherr and Vesti Snyder (Open Eye Theater); Amy Flack (Thousand Islands Performing Arts); Elaine Giguere (Delaware Valley Arts Alliance); Kathryn Hollinger & Chris Norton (Genesee Valley Council on the Arts); Jacquie Hoyt (Arts Council for Wyoming County); Paul Keating (M.J. Quill Irish Cultural & Sports Centre); Susan Grace Moore (Old Songs); Hilary Oak (St. Lawrence County Arts Council); Annette Schweiger (Tioga County Arts Council); Kay Stamer (Greene County Arts Council); Caroline Thompson (Arts Council for the Northern Adirondacks); Liz Williams-Kelly (Cape Vincent Arts Council); Joyce Zummo (Chenango County Council for the Arts); NYS ARTS staff Martha Strodel and Judy Weiner.

After introductions, questions were asked about the state of state funding for the arts and NYSCA contracts. Member monies were cut; member items ranging from \$5,000 - \$10,000 are going through but over that amount will be tough to secure. Local Assistance funds were cut 6% - 2 million cut is in the hopper and might affect the next round of NYSCA funding. May through July funding decisions were not affected. NYSCA administrative budget was cut 10% and there is no travel monies for NYSCA staff. For NYSCA contracts under \$50,000 contracts are moving. Over \$50,000 requires new paperwork for each contract, which could hold up these monies 4-6 weeks. Contact Michael Cummings at [mcummings@nysca.org](mailto:mcummings@nysca.org). With questions. Funding for capital projects up to \$50,000 is available through your legislators. Empire State Development and NYSCA are working on the guidelines for the capital projects over \$50,000; this money is secured, but it's a long project and those getting the funds need to finance many costs upfront. All should participate in one of the NYSCA-ESDC Cultural Blueprint meetings; NYSCA has opened doors to new resources of funding through interagency partnerships.

Funding for rural organizations was the main topic of this meeting. The Rural workshop held in Corning in July explored private resources, including community foundations, united arts funds and private businesses; there was lots of sharing of ideas and information. One of the workshop speakers was Kathryn Hollinger, who described to this group a partnership with her county and town to use a regional resource of WPA paintings to attract visitors and funding. From this project, the Genesee Valley Arts Council has their own renovated building, heat and utilities paid for by the county, and are presently working on a 120 seat theater and gallery. Other counties have supported their arts councils; Hilary Oak made strong connections with her St. Lawrence County board and was told to get the arts council up and running - then come back for county support. She did and went back to her county board and received \$12,000 for first two years of funding, \$15,000 for the third year and is requesting \$25,000 this year; all with a minimum of paperwork.

Caroline Thompson asked the group about their county funding in relation to their population. A list follows of the responses: First is the name of the county, followed by population; then amount of county funding for the arts and how it's used.

Albany  
200,000  
-0- (no arts council)

Chenango  
48,000  
\$ 6,600 (no regrant money)

Essex  
39,000  
\$12,000 (\$6,000 for regrants)

Franklin  
17,000  
-0-

Greene (arts council)  
65,000  
\$60,000 (\$33,000 for GOS, \$27,000 regrants)

Greene (Irish center)  
65,000  
\$10,000 (tourism)

Jefferson  
48,000  
-0- (no arts council)

Livingston

65,000  
\$30,000 (plus building, utilities, maintenance)

St. Lawrence  
111,000  
\$15,000

Sullivan  
70,000  
\$25,000 (\$15,000 for regrants)

Tioga  
49,000  
\$ 9,000 (no regrant money)

Tompkins  
70,000  
\$280,000 total: (\$30,000 for GOS; \$22,000 GOS for Community Box Office; \$10,000 for marketing; \$8,000 for admin of regrant program and \$200,000 for stabilization regrants for major culturals. Source of \$200,000 is a county bed tax.

Wyoming  
55,000  
\$15,800

A number of Rural Partners have developed earned income resources. St. Lawrence reports \$38,000 from classes and gift shop; DVAA nets \$10,000 from gift shop and gallery. Greene has a long standing gift shop but revenues are down. Wyoming does an annual art & craft show at Letchworth Park that pulls in \$100,000: CAP makes \$60,000 through their box office service. Other sources of earned income: space rentals, studio tours, artist markets and art trails.

A few resources mentioned that haven't been highly explored to date: partnerships with businesses and hospitals, nursing homes, art therapy programs, etc. "Brain drain" is common in rural areas - consider partnerships with area community colleges, universities, area employers; the arts provide solid "quality of life" perks. Banks are required to put certain amount of money back into their communities.

It was suggested that we drop the Rurals list serve in favor of a Rurals blog. Staff will develop a Rurals blog and link to it on our website (nysarts.org).

In 2009, we would like to plan a webinar on Funding the Arts in Rural Areas; this could be one or a series - we would appreciate your ideas and input on topics, possible presenter(s) - we can use our new Rurals blog to develop the sessions.

Respectfully submitted by Martha Strodel