

LIFE

STATE OF THE ARTS TO RECAP F-M SCENE

Arts Partnership celebrates 50 years with virtual address



Ellen Shafer / Special to The Forum

For this year's State of the Arts, The Arts Partnership President and CEO Dayna Del Val will present a virtual address to celebrate the organization's 50th anniversary.

By Ethan Mickelson
The Arts Partnership

FARGO

Ten years ago this month, Dayna Del Val was just beginning to form her vision for The Arts Partnership. Now, with the organization celebrating its 50th anniversary, she is set to reach a true milestone.

"We have systematically invested in the arts to improve the community," says Del Val, the organization's president and CEO, about the past decade she's held the position.

Del Val will present TAP's State of the Arts address virtually at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 30, to reflect on new programs, celebrate successes in the arts and address challenges going forward.

"I am far more interested in looking forward than looking back," Del Val says. "There's something about the significance of turning 50 that has me wondering what The Arts Partnership will look like at 75 or 100 years old."

To ensure a diverse, well-rounded future, Del Val will be announcing a slate of board member nominees in the address, including Earnest Lamb, Smita Garg, Shelly Aasen Carlson and Dan Leeaphon.

Changing its name from the Lake Agassiz Arts Council to The Arts Partnership in 2009, the organization has seen growth in various areas over the past decade. This year, TAP granted about \$35,000 to individual artists through privately raised funds and a partnership with concert and



event promoter Jade Presents. The amount awarded through these grants has seen a fourteenfold increase since 2012.

City Arts Partnership grants saw a threefold increase as a result of additional investment from the cities of Fargo, West Fargo and Moorhead. This year, a total of \$97,000 has been granted to nonprofits.

TAP has grown its organizational capacity as well, with an annual budget increase from \$170,000 in 2011 to close to \$500,000 in 2019.

A subtle yet significant change was updating the organization's mission statement, which used to say "cultivating the arts in the community," to a more active phrase, "cultivating the community through the arts." This focus on community has come in various forms, including new offerings and changes to existing programming.

It certainly has been a year of firsts for TAP, including several new programs.

Art at your fingertips

The "TAPpy Hour" series kicked off in March as a result of COVID-19 cancellations and closures throughout the community. To date, Del Val and her team have streamed over 12 hours of live videos on Facebook with total views approaching 20,000.

A recent video from The Rourke Art Gallery + Museum previewed the 61st Annual "Midwest" exhibition with the theme "In Your Own Skin."

Curated quarantine

Adapting TAP's Community Support Art program to work in a virtual format, the organization worked with event production company Livewire to produce a live concert featuring Sarah Morrau and Rebekka DeVries while viewers at home enjoyed cheese plates from Luna Fargo, dessert from Nichole's Fine Pastry and a custom work of art from printmaker Eric Johnson.

Pop-up art party

Another immersive experience came in the form of a first for TAP. Last fall's Salon Party at West Acres featured a violin performance from Benjamin Sung and art talk with Emily Williams Wheeler.

Incubating arts

Also at West Acres, the area's first arts incubator opened next to Best Buy in December 2019. While the space was temporarily closed due to COVID-19 safety guidelines, Aptitude's creative studios will be reopening with limited hours in the coming months.

IF YOU GO

- **What:** The Arts Partnership's virtual State of the Arts presented by Dayna Del Val
- **When:** 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, June 30
- **Info:** This event will be held virtually via Zoom and also livestreamed on Facebook. Visit facebook.com/theartspartnershipfargo and click on the event page to claim a free ticket.

Music at the airport

In keeping with a list of firsts, TAP launched a series of mini concerts through its ArtWORKS program at the end of 2019 at Fargo's Hector International Airport. The program featured musical performances on cello, violin, flute, saxophone and more.

Increasing visibility

Finally, a new communications coordinator, Ethan Mickelson, joined TAP in 2019 and has continued to contribute weekly articles, including this one, to The Forum.

Recent articles by Mickelson have examined how arts nonprofits are retaining employees and continuing programming during the pandemic, as well as local artists venturing into TikTok and an online video performance series.

"The Arts Partnership has bridged all these different audiences — artists, business and community — all along, so it's not surprising that we have come up with these new ways of doing work, because that's really what we do," Del Val says.

This article is part of a content partnership with The Arts Partnership, a nonprofit organization cultivating the arts in Fargo, Moorhead and West Fargo. For more information, visit <http://theartspartnership.net>.

Anyone know about this old canoe that 'draws attention'?

What can you tell Ron Abrahamson about this old canoe he has come to own?

A plaque on it says it was made by McGregor Industries Inc. of Moorhead, but there is no indication of the year it was constructed.

"I know it was designed to slice through waves and to prevent water from coming into it," Ron, of Fargo, writes. "It's definitely a two-person canoe."

"But I've never seen another canoe like this one, and believe me, I've looked!" he says.

Ron is hopeful a "Neighbors" reader might have worked at McGregor and so would know something about this canoe and when it was built.

"It draws attention when I take it out on the lake," he says.

So, friends, can you fill Ron in on his canoe? Let "Neighbors" know.

Curve Station?

And then this hat check was mailed

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Special to The Forum

A "Neighbors" reader is looking for more information about this old canoe manufactured by McGregor Industries Inc. of Moorhead.

Heartbroken over long-lost love

Dear Annie: I'm heartbroken over an event that took place 52 years ago.

I dated a girl in high school for several years and was truly in love. After I graduated from high school in 1967, I asked her to marry me. She took my hand and said that she couldn't because she was pregnant from her former boyfriend. I was shocked, hurt and destroyed from within. Naturally, we broke up, and we both moved on with our lives.

It bothered me more because of the fact that he was an addict and I believe he got her hooked on drugs, and she died at the age of 49.

I worked at the local hospital for many years. One day, upon my return from vacation, I was told that a woman in the ICU had been asking for me. Now, this was 32



ANNIE LANE
Dear Annie

years after our breakup. She remembered me and followed my career in medicine to know I worked there. She died a few days before I returned from vacation.

I found her grave today. It was a sad day. Why does this bother me so much? The cemetery had her obituary. In it, I found enough information about her life after me, including information on her two daughters. Should I contact them and get filled in on her life? — Heartbroken

Dear Heartbroken: I am so sorry for your loss. It's understandable that you are still upset about her death. While time is known to heal wounds, it does not mean we forget about people who were

important to us growing up. Just because you both went on to love other people does not mean you didn't stop caring about each other as friends. The fact that she looked you up all those years later and knew where you worked shows that.

I can imagine being a drug addict and being married to one is a very lonely life. She probably remembered you from before her life was filled with addiction and wanted to say goodbye. Although it is so sad you weren't able to, you could connect to her through her daughters.

There is nothing wrong with reaching out to them, sharing memories of how great their mother was and learning about her life. The main point to stress is this is not about romantic love but rather how you care deeply about her as a friend. The man she married is probably their father, so I

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