

Thursday, October 14, 2004

## Familiar Faces at the 2004 Festival – Welcome Back, Creative Arts “Veterans!”

Of VA’s four national events, the Creative Arts Festival is unique in that in order to attend, a veteran must achieve medal winning status and be invited. Considering the talent present, it is truly an accomplishment to be asked to come back. Almost half of this year’s participants have been to past events and their experience adds a unique perspective to the Festival.



Albert Gray Eagle

Marilyn Adamitis, an artist from Waukesha, Wis., attended her first Festival in 1992 and has been to almost every one since.

She has received national medals in eight different categories and made many Festival friends. She feels that each time, it’s like a family reunion. Her husband, Leonard, is also a frequent participant. Adamitis received her gold medal this year for an intricate knotting project called, “The Red, White and Blue.”

Rick Stang, a singer and wheelchair dancer from Sartell, Minn., has been to about ten Festivals. “The quality of the talent blows me away,” said Stang. “It’s amazing what some of the veterans can accomplish.” Stang has many fond Festival memories, including the emotion that always comes during the stage show. “It doesn’t get any better than that,” he said.

Ed Dunwiddie, an artist from Columbia, Mo., has attended eleven Creative Arts Festivals. He carries a vivid memory of meeting actress and emcee Jane Powell in 1991. They

chatted about his artwork for about twenty minutes and, when he met Powell again several years later, she remembered him. Dunwiddie believes the local competitions are important, as they provide a chance for veterans to show their work and receive encouragement to “try harder, do more, try something new, and make your artwork yours.”

There are many reasons for loving the Festival. For Sherman Watkins, an artist from Hampton, Va., who has attended three times, the traveling and exposure are important. He also enjoys the museums and art galleries. Hager Garriott, a pianist from Scottsburg, Ind., also at his third Festival, said that he has learned a lot from music director Bill Haworth and others involved with the stage show. Helen Fitzgerald, a tap dancer from Loudenville, N.Y., has also attended three times and enjoys the Festival most for the camaraderie. Her special memory is from the 2001 stage show in Prescott when Wayne Miller (another repeat performer) stood up on one leg during “Stand Up America,” lyrics of the closing number, “God Bless the U.S.A.”



Maureen Howell

“I want to be a Festival groupie,” laughed Maureen Howell, an artist



Paint the town

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from LaCrosse, Wis., who is here for the second time. She credits the creative arts program for ending her social withdrawal and pushing her to always try harder with her art. Last year her roommate, April Goodwin, introduced her to Albert Gray Eagle (both frequent participants). Gray Eagle played his flute for Howell, which “brought me peace,” she said.

Charlie Wittwer, a comedian and wheelchair dancer from Cloquet, Minn., likes the people and was especially impressed with veteran Frank Harmon, a veteran with Lou Gehrig’s disease who performed his own play in 2001. “It was a treat to meet and know him,” Wittwer said. “‘Courage’ is a word that is used kind of loosely, but there is definitely a lot of courage shown at the Festival.” While it is not possible to interview everyone returning for a repeat appearance this year, we hope these participants will inspire some of our first-timers to continue practicing. A second invitation, or a tenth, really do happen!

## Show Stoppers — Do’s and Don’ts For Taking Care of Your Voice

### Do’s:

- Drink as much water as you can.
- Rest your voice on performance days.
- Remember to do exercises to warm up your voice.
- Allow your voice plenty of time to heal if you get sick.
- Remember to get plenty of rest and eat a well-balanced diet.
- Open your mouth more when you talk - it will help the sounds come out better.
- Avoid things that dry your system, such as alcohol, carbonated beverages and caffeine.



### Don’ts:

- Smoke; and always avoid second hand smoke.
- Sing outside of your possible range.
- Practice your lines too much at one time. Pace yourself.
- Whisper because it sends extra air to the vocal cords and dries them out.
- Use a monotone voice all the time - make sure you vary how your words come out.
- Clear your throat or cough if you can avoid it - it causes irritation in the vocal chords.
- Slouch if you’re sitting down because it makes it more strenuous for you to speak. Take care of your voice ... it is the most important part of your performance.

## Strokes of Art — Sketching



Today from 2:00 – 4:30 p.m., all Festival participants will visit Red Butte Botanical Gardens, Utah’s premier botanical garden and arboretum located at the University of Utah. While the performers may be inspired to sing about the pristine landscape or dance around the exhibits, our artists will be given a chance to sketch the beauty that surrounds them. Here are a few basic drawing tips for those of you who usually work in some other medium.

- ◆ A sharpened soft (standard No. 2) pencil is great for achieving any desired result.
- ◆ Allow yourself to know it will not look like a photograph – because it is not a photograph!
- ◆ Don’t be afraid to make areas as black as possible and include areas that range from very dark to the white of the paper. Begin by making a grey scale – a 1”x6” rectangle – and fill it with a grade of grey from the white paper to the blackest black the lead will make.
- ◆ Look at the negative space – the area around your subject matter. Begin by looking at these shapes, and at the very least, you’ll start seeing things from different perspectives.
- ◆ Try drawing with your non-dominant hand just to see what kind of creativity results.

Have fun at Red Butte Gardens!

## Media Coverage of Festival at All Time High

This week's Festival event has been the spotlight on local news stations and newspapers. Thanks to the wonderful relationship with local media by the VA Salt Lake City staff, media has been profiling veteran performers/artists



Richard Stang from Sartell, Minn. was interviewed by the *St. Cloud Times*.

throughout the week. In addition, veteran performers and artists are conducting interviews throughout the country with local hometown news reporters.

Be on the lookout for *Men of Vision* from Coatesville, Penn. on Friday, Oct. 15 from 6:15 to 6:30 a.m. on Fox, Channel 13's, "Good Day Utah," one of Salt Lake City's leading morning talk shows. *Men of Vision* will perform live on air and also discuss the Festival's weeklong activities and Friday night's Gala performance and Art Exhibit.

Other veteran performers have been profiled and interviewed during the week:

◆ Edward Dunwiddie, Brian Nesline, Steve Kimmerling and several others were interviewed by reporters at the Artist Interaction Session on Monday. All local television stations, *Deseret News* and the *Salt Lake Tribune* covered the event.

◆ Richard Stang was interviewed by telephone about his Festival experience with a reporter at the *St. Cloud Times*.

◆ Albert Gray Eagle and Warren Weldon discussed their Native American roots with *Indian Country Today*, a national publication.

◆ Leo Bailey spoke with a reporter by telephone at the *Martinez Gazette* in California about his participation in the Festival.



Edward Dunwiddie speaks with photojournalist from local ABC affiliate, KTVX - Channel 4, at the Artist Interaction Session on Monday.

The Festival public affairs team would like to thank you for agreeing to conduct live or telephone interviews with the media. Spreading the word about the Festival enables other veterans to hear about this wonderful event and hopefully gives them the inspiration to participate next year!

### Best Dressed Award Goes to Tacoma Artist!

**"I quit drinking and decided I needed to change everything in my life, including the way I dressed," said Ronald Neal of Tacoma, Wash. Neal is the participant everyone has seen this week in his many colorful and dashing outfits. He owns 29 of them – along with 15 hats and more than 50 pairs of shoes. This week he was able to fit five suits, hats and shoes in one suitcase. As far as packing, "the military taught me well," Neal said. When he wears his white suit with the red and blue accessories he is very patriotic and turns heads. Neal shops at the Discount World Tacoma, in Tacoma, Wash., where the clerks know him well. "My dress-down outfit is a pair of black jeans with a black leather jacket and all my medals from the Festival," said Neal.**



Photos from  
the Festival



Utah Museum of Fine Arts



James R. Floyd, director of  
the VA Salt Lake City  
Health Care System,  
visits with Best of Show  
winner Warren Weldon



# Choir Practice at the Festival



Photos from **the Festival**



Ready for a Breath of Fresh Air - Let's Tour Red Butte Garden, Utah's Botanical Garden!

Red Butte Garden is the largest botanical and ecological center in the Great Basin.

The Garden features eight points of interest, which highlight spectacular natural features such as sandstone rock outcrops, the historic Quarry House, acres of gardens and miles of hiking trails.

The colorful art of Mother Nature can be seen along the four miles of mountain trails and pathways that take you from creek sides to wildflower-covered ridgelines far above the city. Please take your time, as these trails will climb from 5,100 to over 5,700 feet. Take a peek at autumn in all its splendor as you travel more than 100 acres of native plant communities.

Last Saturday you had the opportunity to meet Utah artist Gary Lee Price. Today, you will have the opportunity to see 25 of his creations featuring sculptures of children at play, animals, birds, and mystical or historical characters on display in the Garden.

See you in the hotel lobby at 2 p.m.



A special thank you to all of the Creative Arts Festival participants who recorded their military histories with our Veterans History Project (VHP) staff. Your response has been overwhelming – so much so that all interview slots are filled! If for any reason you are not able to keep your appointment for your interview, please let Butch Miller know (in Room 302) so someone else can be scheduled. Interviews conclude today. We hope to have the VHP come back to the festival next year in Denver.

## Meet the Artist – Joseph Shelleman

Each year, VA's Journal of Rehabilitation Research and Development (JRRD) selects one piece of artwork to feature as a journal cover during the upcoming year, chosen from that year's competition for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. The artist selected for this year's JRRD journal cover is Joseph Shelleman, of Grand Junction, Colo.

Shelleman grew up in Hagerstown, Md. and joined the Army



Sandy Trombetta and Joseph Shelleman hold the painting Shelleman made for Trombetta.

in 1965. During his almost 20-year military career, he was stationed in Germany, Hawaii and Korea, where he served in combat for two years in the demilitarized zone. In 1981, Shelleman was diagnosed with Guillain-Barré syndrome, a disorder in which the body's immune system attacks part of the peripheral nervous system causing weakness in the legs and sometimes the arms and upper body. By 1983, he was medically retired from the Army.

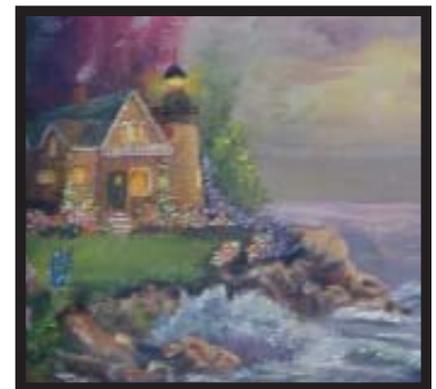
Following his retirement, Shelleman moved to Grand Junction and went to the VA medical center there for his medical care. It was at the VA medical center that Sandy Trombetta,

chief of recreation therapy service, saw that Shelleman had a real talent for painting. Now, he fully enjoys it and says that painting helps him deal with the stress caused by his disease.

This spring, Trombetta saw a painting Shelleman had recently completed and encouraged him to enter it in the National Veterans Creative Arts competition. That painting, entitled "Autumn," was selected by JRRD for one of its 2005 journal covers.

The Journal is a bi-monthly publication distributed to an international VA audience of more than 5,000 readers, serving as a resource for scientists, physicians and other care givers, as well as veterans with disabilities.

Meet Joseph Shelleman today (Thursday) during the Meet the Artist session in the hospitality room on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor (located in the Willow Room), from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. JRRD staff will serve as your hosts.



"Autumn" is Shelleman's winning painting.

# F.Y.I

## Hospitality Room

The Hospitality Room, manned by friendly volunteers, offers snacks, soft drinks, juices and coffee for all Festival participants, staff and volunteers. The room is open from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. in the Willow Room on the fourth floor.



## Professional Continuing Education

The next continuing education courses are scheduled for tomorrow. The first session for staff and veterans, "Work Rehabilitation: Improve Self Confidence and Job Performance," will be presented by Morris Bell, Ph.D. and the VA Office of Research and Development. The other session for staff only, "Self Esteem: Issues and Treatment," will be presented by Sandy Negley. Look at the Friday ArtsGram for more details.

## Medical Support Room



The medical support team will be located on the second floor, Room 202 and available at all times during the Festival week. Medical support team members will also accompany all tours away from the hotel. If you have a medical concern or health issue, please contact your team leader. We hope to make your stay here in Salt Lake City the very best!

## Health Tidbits

Today you will visit Red Butte Garden. Though it has many non-native flowers and plants, the arboretum is surrounded by high desert flora. Sagebrush and ragweed pollen counts are high this time of year in Salt Lake City. Some of you may notice throat irritation, sinus congestion or itchy eyes. All of these symptoms can be due to an allergy to these pollens. If you are having any allergic symptoms, bathing can remove any residual pollen from your skin and hair. Using a saline solution topically can help with eye and nasal irritation and drinking hot tea will ease throat discomfort.

## Meet with Your Team Leader

Meet with your team leader every morning at 8:30 a.m. Check with your team leader for the location of your meetings. On Friday, October 15th, the team leader meetings will be at 9:30 a.m.

## Check out the Festival Web site at: [www.creativeartsfestival.org](http://www.creativeartsfestival.org)

Those requesting hometown news releases will be able to download their release and photo today. Check them out!

## Today's Weather

Mainly Sunny  
High 71° - Low 46°



## Thursday, October 14

### Breakfast — Hot Start Buffet

Fruit Preserves, Butter, Margarine and Cream Cheese  
Fruit with a honey yogurt dressing  
Ham, Egg And Cheese Bagel  
Yogurt, Oatmeal, Assorted Cereal  
Assorted Breakfast Breads  
Low Fat Milk, Tea, Hot Chocolate  
Orange, Apple, Cranberry and Grapefruit Juices  
Regular and Decaffeinated Coffee

### Lunch — Soup And Salad Buffet

Salad Bar  
Fruit with Honey Yogurt Dressing  
One Homemade Soup and Chili  
Assorted Cookies and Brownies  
Turkey, Ham, Roast Beef, Cheddar and Provolone Cheese  
(For Sandwiches)  
Rolls & Butter  
Mustard and Mayonnaise  
Coffee, Lemonade and Ice Tea  
Low Fat Milk

### Dinner — Italian Buffet

Caesar Salad with Creamy Caesar Dressing  
Antipasto Salad  
Marinated Grilled Vegetables  
Seasonable Vegetables  
Marinara, Alfredo and Pesto Sauces  
Fettuccini, Farfalle, Tortellini  
Cheese Ravioli Pasta  
Chicken Parmesan  
Meatballs and Italian Sausage  
Italian Dessert Display  
Fresh Fruit with Orange Dressing  
Garlic Bread Sticks  
Coffee, Lemonade and Ice Tea  
Low Fat Milk

# Thursday, October 14



## Artists



**7:00 - 8:30 a.m. — Breakfast**  
Bonnevill Ballroom 2 & 3, 1st Floor

**8:00 a.m.**  
Team leaders meet with Katy Ryan  
*Oak Boardroom, Third Floor*

**8:30 a.m.**  
Team leaders meet with artists  
*Oak Boardroom, Third Floor*

**9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**  
Meet the Artist, Joseph Shelleman - Journal  
of Rehabilitation Research and Development  
2005 cover artist  
*Hospitality Room*

**9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.**  
Art Exhibit set-up (staff)  
*Gardner Hall, University of Utah*

**Noon — Lunch**  
*Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor*

**2:00 - 4:30 p.m.**  
Artists and performers tour Red Butte  
Botanical Gardens (sketching opportunity)

**5:00 p.m. — Dinner**  
Bonnevill Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor

**7:00 p.m.**  
Caricaturists and ice cream social at hotel  
**\* All Day**  
Help Hospitalized Veterans Craft Care Spe-  
cialists Meetings  
*Tiered Theater, First Floor*



## Performers



**7:00 - 8:30 a.m. — Breakfast**  
*Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor*  
**8:00 a.m.**

Team leaders meet with Liz Mackey  
*Fort Douglas Room, First Floor*

**8:30 a.m.**  
Team leaders meet with performers  
*Fort Douglas Room, First Floor*

**8:45 a.m.**  
Performers depart for Kingsbury Hall (theater)  
University of Utah

**9:00 a.m. - Noon**  
Performers dress rehearsal at theater  
(no orchestra)

**9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.**  
Meet the Artist - Joseph Shelleman  
VA Journal of Rehabilitation Research and  
Development 2005 cover artist  
*Hospitality Room - Willow Room, Fourth Floor*

**Noon**  
Performers depart theater and return to hotel

**12:30 p.m. — Lunch**  
*Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor*

**1:00 - 2:30 p.m.**  
Photos with Jane Powell  
*Fort Douglas Room, First Floor*

**2:00 - 4:30 p.m.**  
Performers and artists tour Red Butte Botanical  
Gardens (sketching opportunity)

**5:00 p.m. — Dinner**  
*Bonneville Ballroom 2 & 3, First Floor*

**6:00 p.m.**  
Performers depart for Kingsbury Hall  
University of Utah  
**7:00 - 10:00 p.m.**  
Dress rehearsal with orchestra at theater  
**10:00 p.m.**  
Depart for hotel