



art • music • drama • dance • creative writing

## \* About the Festival \*

Nationwide, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical facilities use the creative arts as one form of rehabilitative treatment to help veterans recover from and cope with physical and emotional disabilities. Across the country each year, veterans treated at VA medical centers compete in a local creative arts contest. This competition includes 50 art categories that range from oil painting to leatherwork to paint-by-number kits. In addition, there are 120 categories pertaining to all aspects of music, dance, drama and creative writing. The creative writing division is a more recent addition to the competition and includes original works in poetry, essay, short story, and personal experience writing. A national selection committee chooses first, second and third place winners among all of the entries. Select winners are invited to attend the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival each year.

In 2007, 2,839 veterans from nearly 100 VA facilities entered the contest nationwide, with approximately 150 of the medal-winning veterans earning an invitation to participate in the 2007 National Veterans Creative Arts Festival. The 2007 event is being held in St. Louis, Missouri, October 22-28, 2007, hosted by the St. Louis VA Medical Center.

The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is a week of learning, exploring, fellowship and celebration of the healing power of the arts. Because the gold, silver or bronze medal winners are already selected to participate in the Festival, there is no competition at the event itself; rather, it serves as a showcase for the top national winners. During the week of the event, participants may attend classes in paper art creations, print making, leatherwork, and craft art, all taught by local artists.

As part of the Festival, veterans will dine under the famous arch and visit a variety of local sites. Festival activities and opening and closing ceremonies will take place at the Renaissance St. Louis Hotel, Airport.

The Festival event will culminate on Sunday, October 28, 2007, with an art exhibit featuring all first-place art entries, from 12:30-1:45 p.m. in the terrace lobby of the Touhill Performing Arts Center, followed by a gala stage show performance at 2:00 p.m. The stage show is professionally directed with live orchestral accompaniment generously provided by the Music Performance Fund. Tickets are free and actively distributed to assure a full house for the veterans' performance.

The National Veterans Creative Arts Festival is co-sponsored each year by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the American Legion Auxiliary and Help Hospitalized Veterans.