

Annual Report

2016

ArtReach St. Croix is a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting the St. Croix Valley community and the visual, literary and performing arts.

ArtReach fulfills its mission through partnership building and through its touchstone programs and services including: Gallery Exhibitions, Take Me to the River, The Big Read, StCroixSplash.org, Navigate and more.

St. Croix Galleries – Approximately every six weeks, the Visual Arts Committee of ArtReach installs a new exhibit emphasizing the artists of the St. Croix Valley. As the most visible program at ArtReach's location, the gallery exhibitions attract an average of 250 visitors a month. Exhibitions in 2016 featured a range of artists and media, from metalsmithing to oil painting to photography.



One memorable exhibition was *Deceptively Simple*, an exhibition of the late Elizabeth Manfredi. ArtReach was

thrilled to feature the work of this local artist and celebrate her life. 2016's Members Show featured 43 artists including 9 new members. Each year, ArtReach secures funding for three cash prizes to be awarded to member artists. At the closing reception we announce a winner of the Audience Award which is determined by ballots contributed by visitors throughout the exhibition.

Take Me to the River – Take Me to the River is a series of events taking place in the St. Croix River Valley during the month of September. In 2016, ArtReach achieved 1.5 million media impressions with our promotion of Take Me to the River, and over 43,000 visitors attended at least one of the anchor events. Volunteers and staffers maintain booths at these events, promoting and encouraging guests to see everything the St. Croix Valley has to offer.

NEA Big Read – Through the second year of funding by the National Endowment for the Arts Big Read, ArtReach continues the tradition of convening partners (bookstores, schools, book clubs, and libraries), designing a rich slate of multi-disciplinary public programs and engaging a range of host communities around a common book selection. In 2016, the selected book was *Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck. We reached 823 visitors through the Big Read's visual arts exhibitions at our Stillwater galleries and exhibitions of historic photos at Prescott's Great River Road Visitor Center and at UW-River Falls' Library. At least 195 readers joined book discussions and other literary programming with library partners.

StCroixSplash – Art events of all kinds happening in the valley are posted online at stcroixsplash.org. This program features local arts events, boosting visibility of local artists and businesses. StCroix-Splash markets events from painting classes to guided nature walks, and plenty of programs for kids as well! Splash data is syndicated on other websites such as DiscoverStillwater.com, where we saw over 133,500 unique visitors and 429,000 page views in 2016 alone.

The Mobile Art Gallery –Debuting in 2016 was the Mobile Art Gallery, a pull-behind trailer which

has been artfully reconfigured to host programs across the valley. The Mobile Art Gallery features roaming



art exhibitions designed for the intimate gallery space, transforms into a "Fresh Art" roadside stand, and provides a venue for pop-up performances.

At ArtReach St. Croix we believe the arts are an essential part of what makes the St. Croix Valley great. Art-Reach's regional focus is defined by a river that unites the arts and the communities of the lower St. Croix, in eastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin. Through programs and services we create partnership, increase the visibility of the arts in the area and build on the notion that we can do more collectively than the artists and arts organization we work with can do alone.

Founded in 1992, ArtReach St. Croix began as the River Valley Arts Council, a grass roots organization focused primarily on the visual arts in the greater Stillwater area. Conversations about ArtReach's growing role in the Valley set ArtReach St. Croix on a path toward becoming a regional arts service and arts marketing organization.

Mission Statement:

ArtReach St. Croix is a non-profit organization whose mission is to connect St. Croix Valley communities and the arts. ArtReach programs exhibitions and community arts events, supports the work of artists and arts organizations, and provides arts leadership within the St. Croix Valley community.

Board of Directors

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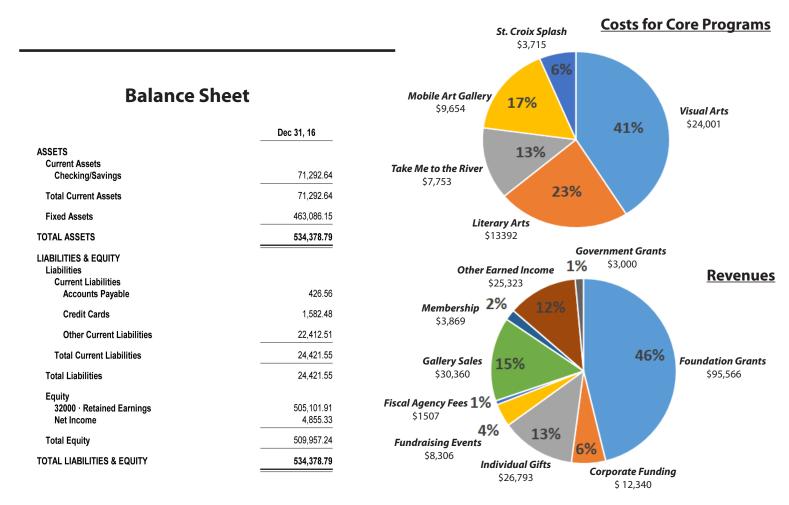
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Facebook:

www.facebook.com/ArtReachSTX **Twitter:** @ArtReachSTX



Behind the Scenes at ArtReach

Staff:

Heather Rutlegde – Executive Director Syndie Sorensen – Program and Marketing Manager Alana Cuellar - Development and Communications Assistant

Core Volunteers:

Visual Arts Committee – Jenn Anderson, Gil Gragert, Diana Hatchitt, Phyllis Hunter, Bev Marx, Barbara Schotl Literary Arts Committee – Colleen Baldrica, Lynne Bertalmio, Kathleen Eddy, Ed Moersfelder, Traci Post, Denise Stephens Gallery Receptionists – Mikki Halsten, John Woolley

Art Reach relies on many other volunteers for events and special projects including Take Me to the River, gardening, facility maintenance and data entry. Thanks to all Board Members and Volunteers.





GREG SEITZ is a writer and environmentalist. He maintains the website stcroix360.com, which updates the community on news related to the St. Croix River at the heart of our geography. He is the resident writer at the St. Croix Watershed Research Station and Communications Partner for Belwin Conservancy. On the ArtReach board, Greg has offered insight helping to shape our work at the intersection of art and nature.

JANE DIERBERGER is a consummate artist. With an extensive background in painting, her work can be found in galleries and cafés across the valley. She is also a dedicated volunteer at ArtReach St. Croix. In addition to her painting practice, Jane is a photographer. Her knowledge and passion for the arts has made her an essential resource for local artists, as her expertise lies in photo documentation of art work. Jane has took photographs of the artist-made birdhouses that were auctioned at ArtReach's annual benefit event this year.





ANNA KOOSMAN is the lead designer of the Mobile Art Gallery. Along with community input, the sleek, contemporary and functional space is inspired by her ten years of working with diverse communities in participatory design. She is focused on sustainable design, and was awarded a Fulbright grant for her work on eco-friendly bamboo building in the Philippines. This project was recognized as the Most Eco-Friendly School in the Philippines by the United Nations in 2015. Koosman is currently teaching at the University of Arizona School of Architecture in Tuscon.

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ArtReach St. Croix relies on the generous support of individuals, local businesses and active members.

To donate please visit: www.artreachstcroix.org/giving