

89-6135

CULTURAL DIRECTIONS FOR KOSCIUSKO COUNTY 1989

Presented by

- Tim Zimmerman - Chairman of the Grace College Music Department,
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- Helen Jones - Adult Services Coordinator, Cardinal Center

With its development and growth, Kosciusko County has attracted many professionals from around the country. This influx of new people has prompted an even greater need for an active cultural program. By first identifying the need, then detailing what cultural avenues currently exist, we will be able to give some proposed cultural direction to the county and the means to fulfill this goal.

The orthopedic industry and companies such as United Telephone and R.R. Donnelley and Sons have attracted many professionals in the medical and business fields. Most of these individuals come to this county from large urban areas with established cultural activities. In contemplating a move to this area, many are looking for fine arts programs available to them and their families. With our lack of cultural activities, a number are hesitant about the move or are choosing to commute from neighboring cities such as Fort Wayne and South Bend.

In a survey of new employees conducted by Zimmer, Inc., the "lack of recreation, entertainment and cultural activity" was always one of the first negative aspects mentioned about the Warsaw area. When asked what Warsaw was lacking, the absence of culture and entertainment was second only to the concern that there were inadequate shopping facilities. Interestingly, the Wagon Wheel Theatre was mentioned as one of the most positive aspects of the community. Another similar survey conducted by Kosciusko Leadership Academy

members Vicki Martin and Dennis Cultice of Lake City Bank produced similar results. The Wagon Wheel was again mentioned as a highlight of the community, while the absence of a civic and performing arts center was the item "the community needs and is now lacking."

The purpose of the second section of this paper is to identify the present cultural activities in Kosciusko County. Cultural activities take many directions, but in our identification process we focused on four main categories: dance, drama, music, and visual arts. We have endeavored to give the flavor of what is available in each of these areas, beginning with the professional levels. These lists are not meant to be a directory, but rather an endeavor to show what is available at the present time to Kosciusko residents and the need for coordination of these activities. We have indicated below those organizations and individuals of professional ranking with a star in front of their names.

DANCE

C.W. Danse Academy - 210 W. Center St., Warsaw

Dance classes in Jazz, Ballet, and Pointe.
Also sponsors Co-Arts Production II (a dance company) and
Young Children's Theatre for ages 8 to 13.

Deb Collier's School of Dance - 1603 Old Road 30 West, Warsaw

Dance classes in ballet, tap, and jazz.
Has a six-girl dance group that performs for service organizations and civic groups.

Lee Anne Stewart Dance - R.R. 5, Syracuse

Dance classes in ballet, tap, and jazz.

Shirley Bell's School of Dance - R.R. 6, Box 123A, Warsaw

Dance classes in ballet, tap, and jazz.

Warsaw Squares

A square dance club which meets on Saturday evenings at Baker's Boys Club.

DRAMA

*Wagon Wheel Theatre - 2517 E. Center Street, Warsaw

Theatre-in-the-round, known for its outstanding summer stock productions and in fall '88 began year-round productions. Opportunity to see equity actors.

*Enchanted Hills Playhouse - Syracuse

Excellent summer stock plays and musicals. Also offers Summer Children's Theatre. Apprenticeships are available for high school and college credit.

Warsaw Civic Theatre - Warsaw

Presents 4 - 5 plays a year. Utilizes talents and skills of people in community in presenting plays. Offers a variety of productions including musicals, dramas, comedies and children's plays. Also has an acting workshop to provide instruction and performing groups for clubs and parties.

Grace College Theatre Department - Winona Lake

Grace College students present several plays during the school year, featuring college students.

Area Schools

Present opportunities for fall and spring plays on a high school level. Classes in drama instruction are provided.

MUSIC

Concerts:

*Lakeland Community Concert Association - a series of three concerts of classical music by international artists. Concerts are attended by members only.

*Wagon Wheel Theatre - in winter has concert series featuring well-known pop, jazz or country artists.

*Zimmer Concert Series - Zimmer has sponsored several public concerts in 1988 and 1989, featuring professional musicians and the Fort Wayne Philharmonic Orchestra. Tickets are sold to the public and proceeds go to charity.

Performing Groups:

Grace College - student groups include the Chamber Ensemble which plays for dinners, receptions, etc., and a Brass Quintet which gives civic performances. Grace Belles is a group of college women who perform on handbells for concerts.

Grace Community Orchestra - an orchestra composed of college, high school, community and professional musicians who present two concerts a year.

Choirs:

Warsaw Community Choir - Richard Anderson, director. Area church choir members come together to present two concerts a year.

Chain-O-Lakes Chorus - Anyone interested in singing may join. Meets once a week and presents a yearly concert. (For information, contact Paul Rife in Silver Lake).

Kosciusko County Extension Chorus - Affiliated with the Purdue Music Organization. Group of any interested ladies from the county. (For information, contact the County Extension Office).

Schools:

Area schools provide opportunities for students to be involved in marching band, concert band, jazz band and choirs. Elementary schools provide music classes and beginning instrument instruction.

Private Lessons:

A variety of private lessons are available in the area from individual instructors. Grace College offers Suzuki group violin instruction for beginning students of violin.

VISUAL ART

*Professional Artists:

Jacki Coffman	- pen and ink, pencil, wildlife
Barb Fuson	- watercolors and pastels, portraits of dogs, horses and cats

Hart & Hart	- commercial art
John Hawkins	- photographer
Laura Hill	- pencil
Vera Hoskin	- watercolors
Cindy Kehoe	- graphic, oils, watercolors, and knowledge of art history
Tim Kennedy	- commercial art
Jeff Klinefelter	- wildlife
Carol McCleary	- graphic
Joyce McNabb	- watercolors, oils
Gary Neiter	- potter
Iva Marie Rosbrugh	- egg decorator
John Woods	- landscape artist
Mike Yazel	- sculpture in wood, portraits

Galleries which show local artists' works:

- *Blue Heron, Warsaw
- *Neck of the Woods, Warsaw

Organizations:

Warsaw China Painters Club - group of artists which meets monthly; members paint on porcelain.

Lakeland Art Association - meetings are held monthly; members include hobbyists and some full-time professionals.

Area Schools:

Provide instruction at all levels by means of art classes. Opportunity to exhibit is provided.

Private Lessons:

Some private lessons are available. These range from individuals providing instruction to small groups which meet from time-to-time as part of a park program, for example.

Having seen the need for cultural activities in our county and identifying programs already established, we need to direct our planning towards the establishment of professional and amateur activities in the fine arts. We would like to see the development of the following programs in the county over the next five years:

- A. Music Concerts Endowed
 - 1. Ft. Wayne Philharmonic Extension Concerts
 - 2. Band Festival Concerts (indoor and outdoor)
- B. Drama
 - 1. Traveling Plays
 - 2. Traveling Operas
 - 3. Continued Development of Wagon Wheel Theatre
- C. Art
 - 1. Facility for Classes and Studios
 - 2. Gallery for Display
- D. Dance
 - 1. Performance of Traveling Companies
 - 2. Regular Performance of Nutcracker (and other ballets)
 - 3. Classes
- E. Education
 - 1. Grace College
 - 2. High School Performances
 - 3. Conservatory Performance Facility

For these programs to be established, one essential project must be a priority: a facility for the Performing Arts. Without a professional quality facility the prospect for cultural development in the county is very unlikely. This goal has been addressed in the past by members of the Lakeland Arts Association and the Greater Warsaw Chamber of Commerce. In their meeting on Monday, September 19, 1988, they stated that their "long range goal is for the fine arts related organizations to have a physical location or building to serve their purposes," with the future "possibility of expanding it to include a fine arts museum."* For the county to attract professional performances as well as an audience, the building of a Kosciusko County Performing Arts Center is a must.

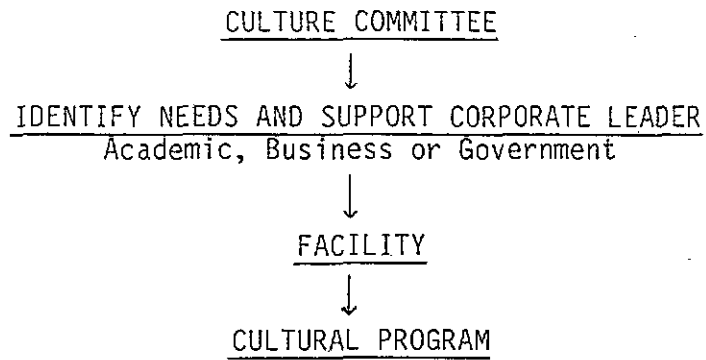
In a community of 10,000 people, this goal will only be accomplished with the cooperation of businesses, academic institutions and local government.

*See attached article by Chris Bowman of the Warsaw Times-Union.

None of these will be able to accomplish this goal alone. To warrant a performance center at a cost of around \$8 - \$10 million, there must be enough cultural activity to justify its existence.

Grace College has already identified a dire need for a performing arts facility to enhance their academic program. They, along with the community, would assure frequent and substantive use of the center. Both Dr. John Davis, president of Grace College and Seminary, and academic dean Dr. Ron Manahan are eager to work closely with the community. Only with local business support, Grace capital fundraising support and state grant support to accomplish this mutual goal can this facility become a reality.

The best way to accomplish this goal is in the following fashion: First, organize a working cultural committee to identify the fine arts needs of the county and the support it would receive. Secondly, this committee must identify a corporate leader from the academic, business or government arena to give direction to the project. This leader would harness the support of the county and push the Performing Arts Center to its completion. With the facility intact, the cultural programs for the community could move ahead and make Kosciusko County a model for other Indiana communities of what can be accomplished by support of all its members. This project will represent an unprecedented level of community cooperation. Kosciusko County needs to start the planning of this project in the next few months so that a vital and healthy cultural program can be firmly established in Kosciusko County in the near future.



Addendum

As a result of work on this paper and the interest of the greater Warsaw Chamber of Commerce, the Cultural Committee was re-established and there are now plans to survey the whole county to identify the community's cultural needs and the level of support for a Performing Arts Facility. (See attached Times-Union article - 5/3/89).

Arts Group Studies Cultural Center

By CHRIS BOWMAN
Staff Writer

The seed may have been planted for a county cultural center as the result of a meeting earlier this week between Lakeland Art Association officers and representatives of the Greater Warsaw Chamber of Commerce.

Association members turned to the chamber for help in finding a permanent facility for housing their artwork and conducting meetings and painting workshops.

Currently, members meet at the Bowen Center every fourth Monday of the month. But the space is limited, and the facilities are not available to conduct workshops.

Lakeland president Lila O'Connell said

association officers have investigated a number of area properties, but have had very little support from area businesses for their cause.

Ideally, O'Connell said, members are interested in having a ground-level facility close to downtown Warsaw.

Chamber director Deb Wiggins said she had looked into grants from the Indiana Arts Commission to help pay for purchasing or leasing a facility.

The problem facing the association is the low appreciation of the fine arts in the Warsaw area, O'Connell said. She used the example of Minneapolis, Minn., where she said government funds are used to help support the arts.

"They have culture coming out of their ears up there," she said.

Her comment sparked Wiggins to propose the idea of a county cultural center, which would promote the many aspects of the fine arts, from music to theatre and painting.

"Culture is one of the areas we need to advance (in Warsaw)," Wiggins said. "Instead of just having an art facility, it could be made more culturally oriented with the cooperation of other civic organizations."

The idea of a cultural center will be brought before the chamber committee and the visitors bureau at their next meetings. Wiggins hopes to create a task force to investigate the possibility of such a center in Warsaw.

Cultural Survey Outlined

BY CARLA GAFF
Times-Union Staff Writer

If you'd like to voice an opinion on the type of art activities and facilities you'd like to see in the county; the chance is at hand.

A cultural committee, organized by the Greater Warsaw Chamber of Commerce, will send surveys throughout the county asking residents to voice their opinion on the arts.

The survey will deal with visual and performing arts including music and drama. It may ask residents to state whether they want a facility, more activities, and if they think it should be paid for entirely by contributions or partially through taxes.

Chamber president Deb Wiggins said the committee needs to secure information and educate the public. "If the public doesn't become a vital part of what we're doing — it's not going to happen," she said.

The committee discussed the idea of starting out with an art museum, performing arts facility or an overall art complex. It discussed the possibility of starting out in the near future on a small scale, or collecting and holding funds until a larger program can be afforded.

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Cultural

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The idea of having Grace College co-sponsor or be an active part of the committee was also discussed.

Grace staff member Ron Clinger said the college may be making some changes in the near future, "and there may be some unique opportunities here." He said he's heard rumblings for some time from people wanting additional art opportunities.

Clinger stressed that he was

not able to speak for the college and could not say whether or not Grace would be willing to be actively involved. He said he would report back to the committee at a later date.

Carol McCleary, commercial artist and committee member, said she felt the community needs to be educated about arts before surveys are sent out. "If surveys are sent out now — most people would say we're doing okay."

- Warsaw Times Union -
5/3/89