



Father Ryan Arts Center

of Focus On Renewal

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Media Advisory/News Release

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Step “Through the Looking Glass” and into a fantastical realm during the Father Ryan Arts Center’s Third Anniversary Benefit ART ON THE ROX

September 2011 (McKees Rocks, PA) – Inspired by the books of Lewis Carroll, the Father Ryan Arts Center of Focus On Renewal and Honorary Chair Deshea Townsend proudly present Art on the Rox: An Evening in Wonderland on Saturday, October 15 to celebrate the arts center’s three-year anniversary with fantastic imagery, live arts experiences, entertainment and tributes in celebration of the arts center’s three-year anniversary.

Beginning at 6 pm, the benefit (located 420 Chartiers Avenue in McKees Rocks) will commence with the sounds of the Homme Jazz Ensemble and a cast of literary characters to welcome guests. Patrons are encouraged to embrace the Wonderland theme by wearing their most Burton-esque attire.

All of the proceeds will benefit the arts center’s programs – arts education classes, Reader’s Theater Program for elementary school children, after-school arts experiences – through which thousands of students and adults are given the opportunity to learn about art, engage in hands-on art activities and think creatively.

Guests will enjoy:

- **Live and silent auctions** featuring never-before-seen commissioned artwork from Art Rooney Jr.’s private collection, ceramic art by artisans inspired and encouraged by Elvira Peake; gift baskets from local retailers and restaurants and the ultimate gift for any wine connoisseur – our Wall of Wine auction; Live Art Auction is hosted by former City Councilman Doug Shields
- **Live performances** – with a **Fantasy Concert** featuring resident artists and students from the Father Ryan Arts Center: **Mid-Atlantic Contemporary Ballet** dancers performing solo routines inspired by Alice and her Wonderland companions; performers from **Actors Civic Theater** and our very own **Youth Musical Theater** students will entertain audiences with fairy tale scenes;
- **Art exhibitions** featuring the work of local and international ceramicists and a **Live mural presentation** featuring Pittsburgh Artist **Kyle Holbrook** founder of the **MLK Community Mural Project** and four local high school art students;
- **Roxy Award presentation** honoring ceramic artist and mentor **Elvira Peake**;
- **Mad Hatter's photo booth** (pick a hat – any hat, and have your picture taken with the Mad Hatter a.k.a. **Father Regis Ryan**);
- **Costume contest** – prizes will be awarded to guests for best costumes (both male and female) and most creative costumes;

- **Variety of hors d'oeuvres and beverages** from local chefs and restaurants including Salt of the Earth, Pierogies Plus, Joyce's Cookies, Vocelli's Pizza, Marge's Place, J&G Catering and Pepsi Bottling Group.

Also, patrons will be only inches away from artists at work. Kyle Holbrook from the MLK Community Mural Project will amaze guests with a live mural as he guides four Sto-Rox High School students through an interactive art experience.

Since opening in 2008, the Father Ryan Arts Center has been committed to providing arts education, training and appreciation to the residents of the Sto-Rox area, with particular focus on youth. It is also committed to improving McKees Rocks and neighboring communities by cultivating interest among residents in the educational, cultural and civic conditions of the area.

"We are providing an important service by educating and introducing youth and adults to new ideas and different perspectives that has been absent for much too long in neighborhoods such as McKees Rocks," said Father Ryan Arts Center Director Pat Moran. "With the help of our supporters and funders, we have given many local artists the opportunity to show their work, use our studio spaces, and exhibit in our gallery. We have also given a voice to many emerging artists by providing them a forum to create and express themselves, and we hope to continue this tradition well into the future."

Ticket reservations are \$100 per person. For ticket purchases, call 412.771.3052. Sponsorship opportunities are available, contact Pilar Brown at pbrown@forstorox.org for more information about these limited opportunities. To learn more, visit: www.fatherryanartscenter.org

THE HONOREE/ROXY AWARD

The Father Ryan Arts Center is pleased to present this year's Roxy Award to Ms. Elvira Peake whose work inspired generations of aspiring artists to follow their dreams and who has had a profound impact on the Pittsburgh region. In keeping with the "Through the Looking Glass" spirit, the Roxy Award was hand-crafted by stained-glass artist and arts educator Lu Ann Prill to symbolize the visionary spirit of the recipient and to embody her advocacy, support, leadership and creativity in influencing the arts among communities, families and individuals. Ms. Peake was chosen this year because of her life-long dedication in the ceramic arts as founder of the Clay Place and for being the catalyst and inspiration behind numerous emerging ceramicists.

SPONSORS

Premier Sponsors: Babst, Calland, Clements & Zomnir, P.C.; Universal Steel Buildings

Wonderland Sponsors: Margie Rose and Inspired by Angels Imports

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Not-So-Mad Hatter Sponsors: Carlow University, Graduate Arts Education Department; Committee to Re-elect Mary Ann Cercone; Made For Today and Judy Rose; Kathy McCauley and Andrew Washburn; Sisters of St. Joseph, Baden PA; Valerian F. Szal Funeral Home, Inc.

For more information about all of our supporters, contributors and auction sponsors please visit:
www.fatherryanartscenter.org/ArtOnTheRox.html

ABOUT THE ARTS CENTER

With a vision of empowering individuals and developing successful community partnerships, education programs and outreach initiatives, the Father Ryan Arts Center makes the arts available to wide and diverse audiences throughout the Pittsburgh region. It is a multi-level facility in the heart of McKees Rocks committed to providing artistic education, enrichment and entertainment. The arts center features 26,000 square feet of energetic, vibrant space. To learn more, visit the center's website at www.FatherRyanArtsCenter.org.

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Focus on Renewal (F.O.R.) is a non-profit human service agency that has served the McKees Rocks community for 40 years, and is nationally recognized as a model of comprehensive services to low-income people of all ages. For program information, call 412.771.6460 or visit www.forstorox.org.

A program of Focus On Renewal, the Father Ryan Arts Center is a multilevel facility in the heart of McKees Rocks. Its mission is to inspire, empower and enlighten local residents through the arts by developing the spirit, mind and body of all who participate. Call 412.771.3052 or visit www.fatherryanartscenter.org.