



Father Ryan Arts Center

of Focus On Renewal

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Press Release

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Father Ryan Arts Center Celebrates Grand Opening Weekend October 4 and 5 in McKees Rocks!

McKees Rocks, PA, September 17, 2008 — At long last, Focus On Renewal (FOR) will commemorate the grand opening of the Father Ryan Arts Center with a weekend celebration October 4 and 5 with day-long hands-on arts activities, family-friendly entertainment, free food, guided tours, gallery exhibits, live performances and much more!

FOR invites you to discover a place where your family, friends and neighbors discover something new and expressive every day, prepare for the journey of life, and share in enriching experiences. Discover a place, not just a building, but a community where ideas and action collide, where learning and purpose take flight. Discover a place to call your own.

The Father Ryan Arts Center, supported by Focus On Renewal, has offered a glimpse of that place through its after-school and community arts programs in dance, theater, creative drumming and visual arts over the past five years while securing partnerships and funding to renovate a vacant building into a state-of-the-art, multi-level arts center dedicated to the exploration of artistic participation and enrichment. Now, FOR welcomes you to celebrate the history, cultural diversity and revitalization of its community with wonderful performances, presentations, entertainment and interactive activities, as well as significant local and cultural attractions for the entire community.

The Sto-Rox Marching Band will kick-off the celebration at 11:30 Saturday morning outside the building at the intersection of Chariters and Bell Avenues followed by brief comments and a ribbon cutting ceremony at noon. The festivities will continue inside with the unveiling of the new arts center logo, created by local graphic designer Chris Stys, as well as a series of 4-foot-by-6-foot mosaics created by local artists and students in partnership with the MLK Community Mural Project, to welcome visitors to the arts center.

“Just like the arts, this center is for everyone,” said Father Regis Ryan, executive director of Focus On Renewal. “So many people have been instrumental in making this happen that we felt hosting a weekend for artists, students, residents, families and neighbors to explore as many avenues of art as

possible would be the perfect way to open our doors.” The October 4 and 5 opening is free to the public and everyone is welcome.

Many talented artists and performers have stepped forward to support this historic achievement in the history of FOR and McKees Rocks including: Pittsburgh Dance Ensemble; Actors Civic Theater; IonSound Project; The Pillow Project; Don Obusek’s Tribute to the Magic of Elvis; Studio J: Hip Hop; Dixie Doc and the Pittsburgh Dixieland All-Stars; Rus’kyj Muzikanty with flutist Andrei Pidkivka; Saint John of God Parish Church Choir; Hip Hop on L.O.C.K. Project; First Baptist Church of McKees Rocks; rEvolve Dance Theatre; Pittsburgh Musical Theater; Joe Grushecky; and Sounds of Pittsburgh Chorus.

Visitors will have the opportunity to experience hands-on arts activities in dance, literary arts, music, theater and visual arts; tour the arts center; meet artists and teachers; watch a live performance; stay for lunch in the new café; learn more about the arts center; and register for fall classes. All activities are free and open to the public. Sunday’s activities will commence at noon with an Open House and additional opportunities for artistic exploration and appreciation!

In partnership with many of Focus on Renewal’s other programs, the Father Ryan Arts Center hopes to reach all neighborhoods, providing cross-cultural and inter-generational arts programming, explained Patricia Moran, arts center director. “We hope that this center will be a source of inspiration and influence for the entire Pittsburgh region.”

Schedule of events:

Saturday, October 4, 2008 11:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. & 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Sunday, October 5, 2008 12 p.m. - 5 p.m. & 7 p.m. - 9 p.m.

For more information or a schedule of events, please visit

<http://forstorox.org/PDF/EventSchedule.pdf>.

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