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ARTS COUNCIL OF SOUTHEAST MISSOURI RECEIVES GRANT

CAPE GIRARDEAU, MO-- The Arts Council of Southeast Missouri recently received a grant in the amount of \$10,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts. The grant will help in continuing the mission and development of the Arts Council of Southeast Missouri by allowing the organization to assist in funding the 2016 and 2017 Cape Girardeau Outdoor Sculpture Exhibits on Broadway.

The inclusion of more art in public spaces around Cape Girardeau began as an initiative three years ago. A Public Art Committee consisting of a local artist and representatives from the Arts Council of Southeast Missouri, Old Town Cape, Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Cape Girardeau developed a public art policy, which gave a framework to managing and increasing public art in Cape Girardeau. Following City Council approval of the policy, the committee coordinated a temporary exhibition that opened on Broadway in 2014. After the success of the inaugural exhibit, another year-long show opened in April 2015. Sponsors of these exhibits have included: the City of Cape Girardeau, Cape Girardeau Convention and Visitors Bureau, Old Town Cape, and the Arts Council of Southeast Missouri.

According to Murielle Gaither, Executive Director of the Arts Council, "The Annual Outdoor Sculpture Exhibit has afforded our organization a wonderful opportunity to reach a diverse population through the arts. By our estimations from traffic data, nearly 3 million motorists and pedestrians are able to enjoy the arts through the sculptures on Broadway each year."

The Arts Council of Southeast Missouri was established in 1961. Its sole purpose is to provide a forum for the residents of the Southeast Missouri region to explore, experience, and share in the diversity and the excitement of the arts. Other significant contributions include the annual Christmas Arts and Crafts Extravaganza, monthly art exhibits and coordination of First Friday with the Arts, the Children's Arts Festival, Poetry Out Loud, the Visual Arts Cooperative, juried exhibitions, and resources for local artists.

Great thanks go to the National Endowment for the Arts for this generous grant. The National Endowment for the Arts is an independent federal agency supporting artists and arts organizations and bringing the arts to all Americans.

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