

Driftless Area Art Festival Introduces Area's First Non-Event

April 30, 2016—For the past ten years, the Driftless Area Art Festival has held a Spring Gala to raise funds to support the event, to raise funds for school art programs through a KidsArt auction, and to celebrate the region's notable talents in art, music and food. This year, the festival's organizers are taking a different route, announced with a humorous "Non-Gala" invitation to stay home in your comfy clothes, on your comfy couch, on the evening that the Gala would normally take place. That, plus an appeal to still support the festival.

"We have really appreciated all the artist and community support that made all those Galas great successes, and which have gone a long way to make the Driftless Area Art Festival possible," said co-chair Liz Quebe. "But we wanted to simplify things, and consolidate two major events—the Gala and the Festival-- into one, and still keep the popular elements of the Gala intact."

This year, the silent auction of artists' works will take place during the festival. Participating artists from the Driftless Area will donate representative works, and art lovers may bid on these pieces from 11:00 am to 2:00pm on Saturday. Winners may pick up their pieces immediately after close of bidding. The same schedule will be followed on Sunday. The silent auction will offer a preview of artwork, and encourage attendees to see the full bodies of artists' work in their booths.

One of the highlights of the weekend is the Saturday night reception for participating artists (visual, culinary and performing), festival Partners and Sponsors, volunteers and Friends of the Driftless Area Art Festival. New this year will be the live auction of the 2015 winning KidsArt pieces. Since its inception, this live auction has raised \$9,235 to support art programs of schools in the Driftless Area. Another new highlight of this year's reception will be the presentation of the Best of Show Award.

The festival invites area art lovers to become a Friend of the Festival, which ensures the continuation of this growing regional event, now in its twelfth year. So instead of buying a couple of Gala tickets, a new outfit (after finding last year's no longer fits), and bidding on a fine piece of art or two, consider applying those dollars to becoming a Friend (\$25-\$99), a Good Friend (\$100-\$249), a Best Friend (\$250-\$499), or a Best Friend Forever--well, for a year anyway—(\$500 or more). Checks can be made to Community Development Alternatives, Inc. (the non-profit under which the art festival operates), and sent to Anna Rodriguez, 335 Minshall Avenue, Viroqua, WI 54665. Friends receive a 2016 Friends button, with beautiful artwork by Toril Fisher, and an invitation to the Saturday night reception.

The 2016 Driftless Area Art Festival will be held September 17-18 in Beauford T. Anderson Park, Soldiers Grove, Wisconsin. Partners include Peoples State Bank, the Village of Soldiers Grove and its Community Development Corporation, Wisconsin Public Radio, and Community Developments Alternatives, Inc. More information can be found at www.DriftlessAreaArtFestival.com and on our Facebook page.