

Arts Advocate Handbook

Welcome to Arts Advocacy Day 2008! The success of Arts Advocacy Day depends upon the willingness of people like you who take time away from their busy lives to come to the Capitol and talk to legislators about the importance of the arts. This year we will be making history!

YOU are the most important person here today.
Thank you for being an Arts Advocate.



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Minnesota Citizens for the Arts believes that the diversity of Minnesota's artistic and cultural resources and traditions is what makes this state so rich and vibrant. MCA will create and abide by policies that increase and support diversity and access within the organization and will provide leadership to the field in advancing arts opportunities for all Minnesotans. MCA will ensure that our programs are available to all Minnesotans regardless of age; religion; cultural, ethnic and racial differences; physical and mental abilities; economic status; gender; sexual orientation; and geography.

Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all MCA services, programs and activities including making any of our information available in alternative formats such as Braille, large print or CD.

7:30 to 8:00 a.m. Registration & Coffee at the Minnesota History Center
History Center Lobby

Those not attending the Advocacy Class can register and socialize until 8:30.

8:00 to 8:30 a.m. Advocacy Class for New Attendees
History Center Auditorium

Designed for first-time arts advocates or those who need a refresher, this class is a basic orientation to arts advocacy.

8:30 to 9:30 a.m. Advocacy Seminar & Join Your Team
History Center Auditorium

You need to attend this session in order to join your team.

MCA's Executive Director Sheila Smith, Lobbyist Larry Redmond and special guests from the Capitol will give attendees the inside story on arts issues in the 2008 session. Be the first to hear the latest news on the Great Outdoors & Heritage Amendment.

9:30 to 10:00 a.m. Walk / Ride to the State Capitol

Teams will walk or ride a shuttle bus three blocks to the Capitol. It may be quicker to walk. The shuttle bus will run every 20 minutes until 1:00 pm; its stops are noted on the map on page 2.

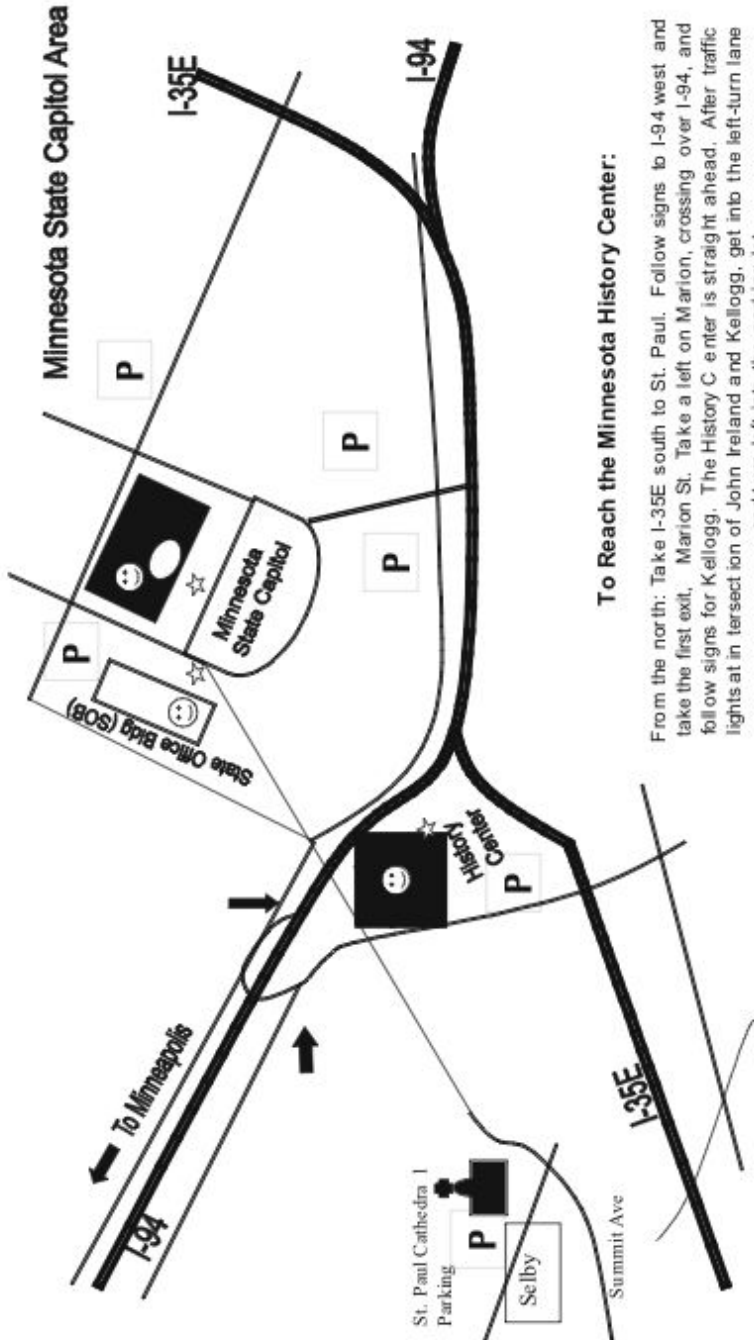
10:00 to 1:00 p.m. Legislator Appointments
State Capitol & State Office Buildings

Teams meet with legislators. *Meeting times and locations are noted on your Team Sheet.*

An experienced advocate will lead your team on legislative meetings. In between appointments visit the MCA Home Base in the Great Hall of the Capitol where you can write a letter to the Governor, take a tour of the Capitol, or grab lunch in one of the cafeterias. Most teams will be finished by 1:00 p.m.

MCA's Home Base is in the Great Hall of the Capitol building

CAPITOL AREA MAP AND DIRECTIONS



To Reach the Minnesota History Center:

From the north: Take I-35E south to St. Paul. Follow signs to I-94 west and take the first exit, Marion St. Take a left on Marion, crossing over I-94, and follow signs for Kellogg. The History Center is straight ahead. After traffic lights at intersection of John Ireland and Kellogg, get into the left-turn lane and turn left into the parking lot.

From the south: Take I-35 north, which merges with I-94 west, and exit at Kellogg Blvd. Turn left on Kellogg and take the first right into the parking lot.

From the east: Take I-94 west. Exit at Marion St. and take a left on Marion, crossing over I-94. Follow the signs for Kellogg Blvd. After the intersection of Kellogg and John Ireland Bldvs., get into the left-turn lane and turn into the parking lot.

From the west: Take I-94 east to Marion St./Kellogg Blvd. exit. Follow the signs for Kellogg. After the intersection of Kellogg and John Ireland Bldvs., get into the left-turn lane and turn into the parking lot.

P Parking Spots

Parking is available for a fee in the parking lot adjacent to the History Center.



Bus Stops

MCA BUS STOPS: Every 20 minutes in front of the History Center, at the west guard shack in front of the Capitol's southern steps, and in front of the State Office Building (SOB).



Lunch Spots

Lunch is available in cafeterias in the State Capitol, the Minnesota History Center and the State Office Building.

Eight Short Tips on Meeting With Legislators

- 1 **Make sure you have your facts straight.** Take a moment to familiarize yourself with the materials in this handbook before you meet with legislators. You don't need to memorize the information provided, but reading it ahead of time will help to refresh your knowledge of current arts issues. If a legislator asks you something that you don't know, don't guess. Instead, offer to send the information to them at a later date. Let MCA know if you need help!
- 2 **Be on time, be polite, be patient and be nice.** There is no quicker way to lose support for your issue than by being rude to legislators. Your legislator may have two committee meetings going on while they are supposed to be meeting with you and may be late. They can't help being overscheduled. Don't be offended – be glad that you have gotten some of their time and make the most of it.
- 3 **Introduce your team members and note what connection each person has to the legislator's district.** Talk to each other before your meetings so you know everyone's connections to the legislators and their districts. Your team may include people who live in the legislator's district (constituents), people from organizations who have received grants from the MN State Arts Board (MSAB) or Regional Arts Council (RAC), people from organizations that have toured the legislator's district or an artist who has done a residency in one of the legislator's local schools. You may even be with one of the legislator's friends!
- 4 **KISS: Keep it Short and Simple.** Our mission on Arts Advocacy Day 2008 is to ask legislators to pass the Great Outdoors and Heritage Amendment. You may only have the legislator's ear for five minutes, so get to the point as soon as everyone has introduced himself or herself. Be clear about why you are there, why they should care, and what you want.
- 5 **Make your issue personal.** If you have time, tell stories about how arts funding and state grants have benefited the people and communities in the legislator's district. Your team leader will have a list of the grants that have been awarded in the district. How have these benefited children in the area? Senior citizens? How have the arts brought the community together?
- 6 **Before you leave, say "thank you" again.** Your team leader will also have a thank you card for each legislator that your team meets with – be sure to sign them.
- 7 **Let us know what happened in your meetings!** Please fill out an evaluation form for every meeting you attend (evaluation forms are in your folder) and give completed forms to your team leader or MCA staff at Home Base in the Capitol's Great Hall. Your feedback is very important to us, so please take a few minutes to jot down your impressions and any specific statements of support or opposition that the legislator made.
- 8 **Let this be the beginning of your relationship with your legislators.** When you get home, send your legislators a note thanking them for their time. Invite them to local arts events, openings and other activities that they or their family may enjoy. **Be a resource to your legislators.** If he or she expressed interest in obtaining information on a certain arts issue or organization, send it to them. Let MCA know if you need help.

What are the Messages of the Day?

Today's primary message is:
To Pass the Great Outdoors & Heritage Amendment Now!

What Are Our Goals for Arts Advocacy Day 2008?

1. To ask legislators to pass the Great Outdoors & Heritage Amendment
2. To educate legislators about arts activities in their district.
3. To give a face to the arts in each legislator's district.

What Are the Big Arts Issues This Year?

1. Pass the Great Outdoors & Heritage Amendment!

WHAT IS IT?

In November of 2008, on the 150th anniversary of our state, Minnesota voters will have an historic opportunity to invest in clean water, wildlife, cultural heritage and natural areas for future generations. Voters will be asked following question on the ballot:

"Clean Water, Wildlife, Cultural Heritage and Natural Areas"

"Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to dedicate funding to protect our drinking water sources; to protect, enhance, and restore our wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat; to preserve our arts and cultural heritage; to support our parks and trails; and to protect, enhance, and restore our lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater by increasing the sales and use tax rate beginning July 1, 2009, by three-eighths of one percent on taxable sales until the year 2034? Yes No"

HOW WILL MINNESOTANS BENEFIT?

We will ensure the preservation and restoration of Minnesota's environment, clean water, parks and cultural heritage by creating dedicated funding for these purposes.

WHERE WILL THE MONEY GO?

If approved by the voters, this slight increase in the state sales tax would raise approximately \$291 million per year, beginning to be available in 2010, of which 33 percent will go to an outdoor heritage fund to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands, prairies, forests, and habitat for fish, game and wildlife; 33 percent will go to a clean water fund to protect, enhance, and restore water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams and to protect groundwater, 19.75 percent for arts, arts education, arts access and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage and 14.25 percent to support parks and trails of regional or statewide significance.

HOW WILL THE ARTS AND CULTURE BENEFIT?

If passed by the voters, this amendment will raise approximately \$58 million annually for the arts, arts education, history and cultural heritage. The amount would increase slightly over time because of inflation. Funding to the Minnesota State Arts Board and Regional Arts Councils now is about \$10.2 million/year, and would increase to about \$30M /year in the first year, and then increase with inflation over the next 25 years. Arts organizations and activities in the state will

benefit from a doubling or tripling of arts funding to help them serve Minnesotans statewide. Currently there is no direct state funding for arts education, separate from ordinary education system funding, and some portion of the funding will be designated for arts education. Money from this new pool will also potentially fund Minnesota's historical societies.

WHY A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT? WHY NOW?

Passing this amendment would be a resounding statement of how we as Minnesotans value both the arts and environment, which are important pillars of our identity as a state. Minnesota voters know that protecting and preserving our water, parks and cultural heritage is a long-term investment worth making.

The arts need a stable, long term and protected source of funding. While the arts are a very tiny part of the state's budget (currently about \$10 million of the state's roughly \$35 billion budget), they are slashed every time the state has a budget deficit. In fact, we lost 32% of arts funding in a state deficit in 2003. Few other items in the state budgets were cut as much as the arts.

The state's budget will get progressively tighter as the Boomer generation retires, posing increasing demand on the state's pension plans, health and human services and social services. In addition, there are ever increasing demands on the state's budget for education and transportation. Smaller budget items like environmental conservation and culture will be increasingly squeezed. Unless we act now with stable, dedicated funding, these areas could be left behind.

Minnesotans frequently use our constitution to take care of issues the legislature is not addressing. In fact, Minnesota's constitution has been amended 118 times since it was adopted. It's been amended 33 times since 1960, just about every year and a half on average in that period. Our constitution is a detailed, living document, much different than the national constitution that rarely is amended. In fact, Minnesota's constitution was amended just last year to dedicate funds for transportation.

The legislature will still retain oversight over how the funds are spent for the environment and culture. The constitutional amendment pays for itself by creating its own revenue, so doesn't take away from the rest of the budget. It also creates new accounts into which the new money will go, but leaves the disposition of the funds to the legislature, as long as they are spent for these purposes.

The legislature has committed to pass the bill that will make the ballot initiative a reality. Both the House and Senate passed the bill to the conference committee by large margins in the 2007 session. The conference committee agreed to the bill and sent it back to the floors. It did not make final passage merely because they ran out of time at the end of the legislative session. Leadership in both houses have vowed to pass it first thing in the next legislative session, which starts February 2008. It's going to happen, and we need to get ready now. It will take more than a year and a half to create and implement a campaign to pass the amendment on the ballot in November of 2008. **This is our one chance to pass dedicated funding for our cultural and outdoors heritage. We may never get this chance again.**

CAN IT PASS?

Polling done by conservation groups shows public support to pass the ballot initiative in November 2008. Nationally, 75% of conservation measures have passed, most of which were tax increases. There have been 31 local and regional conservation measures proposed in Minnesota since 1998 of which 83% have passed.

Is There Anything Else I Can do to Help?

Yes!

4 Simple ways you can help the cause:

1 **Join MCA's e-mail Arts Alert list, and be the first to hear arts news from the Minnesota Citizens for the Arts.**

Go to MCA's website at www.mncitizensforthearts.org or send an e-mail to staff@mncitizensforthearts.org to join the Arts Alert List.

2 **Volunteer to help pass the constitutional amendment this November.**
Watch arts alerts for opportunities to get involved.

You can also put your name on our volunteer list by sending an e-mail to: staff@minnesotacitizensforthearts.org

3 **Vote for the constitutional amendment. Tell your friends and co-workers to vote for it too!**

4 **Send a thank you letter to your legislators when you get home asking them to support the arts. Get your friends to write a short letter too.**

According to Rep. Alice Hausman,
"Ten letters can influence a legislator."

Your letter can be very short and simple. All you need to include is:

- Your name and home address
- An opening sentence that says: "Thanks for meeting with us (or "I'm sorry we didn't get to meet with you on") Arts Advocacy Day. I just wanted you to know that I would like you to support the arts."
- If you have more time, you can also add a few notes about the arts in your town and how important they are to your community. That's it!

Send your letters to the following addresses:

Representative _____
c/o MN House of Representatives
State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator _____
c/o MN State Senate
State Capitol Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Minnesota Citizens for the Arts: Your Statewide Arts Advocacy Organization

MCA's Board Members Come From Every Corner of the State:

Maxine Adams, Fergus Falls
Sandy Agustin, Minneapolis
Sandy Boren-Barrett, Maple Plain
Beth Burns, St. Paul
Carolyn Bye, Excelsior
Hal Cropp, Lanesboro
Barb Darland, Duluth
Sean Dowse, Red Wing
Craig Dunn, St. Paul
Brenda Flintrop, Waseca
Kathleen Hansen, Minneapolis
Charlene Hudgins, Moorhead
Amy Hunter, Staples
James Kent, Crookston
John Limbacher, St. Paul
David Marty, Grand Rapids
Carla McGrath, Minneapolis
Margaret Miller, Minneapolis
John Nuechterlein, St. Louis Park
Michael-jon Pease, St. Paul
Rebecca Petersen, Fergus Falls
Mary Ann Pulk, Minneapolis
Chris Rasmussen, Sauk Rapids
Michael Robins, Minneapolis
Leslie Schumacher, Princeton
Rick Shiomi, Minneapolis
Ann Spencer, Bloomington
Amy Stoller Stearns, Detroit Lakes
George Sutton, Cushing
Sheila Terryll, Minneapolis
Amanda Thompson Rundahl, Braham
Ben Vander Kooi Jr., Luverne
Bill Venne, Golden Valley
James Wafler, Maplewood
Delina White, Deer River
Daniel Zielske, Mankato

MCA Life Board Members:

Steve Barberio, Hopkins
Jean Fournier, Apple Valley
Karen Gray, Spring Grove
Jennifer Halcrow, Minneapolis
Bill Miller, Duluth
John Roth, Minneapolis
Charles Skrief, St. Paul
Ben Vander Kooi, Luverne

MCA Staff:

Executive Director: Sheila Smith
Lobbyist: Larry Redmond
Operations Mgr: Mark Albers
Interns: Sara Shaylie
Tara Degan

Minnesota Citizens for the Arts is a diverse, grassroots statewide arts advocacy organization whose mission is to ensure opportunity for all people to have access to and involvement in the arts. MCA's successes include increasing the state's appropriation from nothing to a peak of over \$13 million per year, securing and protecting tax exemptions for non-profits in Minnesota, and working on behalf of the arts with Minnesota's congressional delegation. MCA does not endorse any candidate for any office.

What Does MCA Do? MCA serves the statewide arts community's interests by lobbying the Minnesota State Legislature and representing the interests of the arts community to the Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) and Regional Arts Councils (RACs). On behalf of the arts community throughout Minnesota, MCA organizes arts advocates from around the state to lobby legislators. Our issues include arts funding, tax policies that affect charitable giving and non-profits, and arts education. MCA lobbies on other issues important to the non-profit arts both at the Legislature and in the U.S. Congress. MCA also conducts original research.

MCA's staff and Board of Directors come from all over Minnesota and not only work with arts organizations of every genre, size and type, but also come from the general public. Half of MCA's board of 36 directors comes from Greater Minnesota. Our board membership represents every corner of the state.

MCA is a grassroots advocacy organization. This means that we organize members of the arts community and public to demonstrate the importance of the arts in Minnesota and to affect the outcome of legislative decisions by making sure that our elected officials hear the voices of the arts community. Our coalition includes artists, audiences, arts educators and arts organizations, big and small, and the general public in metro, suburban and rural areas who believe, as we do, that the arts contribute in positive ways to communities statewide.

The most important piece of this puzzle is YOU. Your input is important to your legislators, whether it be letters, meetings, phone calls, or even a simple postcard. We succeed because thousands of arts advocates in the state of Minnesota, organized by MCA, make their voices heard year after year. We are here to help you be effective!

**Find out how you can become an ARTS
ADVOCATE, and join MCA.**

Frequently Asked Questions

What Issues Does MCA Work On?

- ✓ **State Arts Funding.** To ensure access to the arts for all Minnesotans by working to protect, and if possible increase, state appropriations to the arts in Minnesota. State funding reaches into every Minnesota county via the grants and services of the Minnesota State Arts Board and Regional Arts Councils.
- ✓ **Enlightened Tax Policies.** Recognizing and encouraging the public's engagement with and support of nonprofits by working to promote and maintain tax policies beneficial to charitable giving, arts philanthropy and nonprofit arts organizations.
- ✓ **National Arts Issues.** To support federal funding of the arts, enlightened national tax policies for charities and other issues of interest to arts supporters.
- ✓ **Cultural Bonding Requests.** To support a state role in providing resources to create cultural infrastructure in Minnesota, but not to work on any individual organization's project.
- ✓ **Arts Education.** To support the inclusion of arts as a basic requirement in Minnesota schools by supporting the work of our sister organization, the Arts Education Consortium.

Where Does State Arts Money Go?

State arts funding goes to the Regional Arts Councils (RACs) and Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB). Between the Arts Board and Regional Arts Councils, state money reaches every single Minnesota county in grants and services, and all legislative districts benefit from these grants:

The Minnesota State Arts Board



- A. Gives grants to medium and large arts organizations, individual artists and schools, series presenters, folk arts and festivals across the state.
- B. Provides newsletters, artist and space directories, workshops and technical assistance to all.

The Regional Arts Councils



- A. Give grants to small and medium arts organizations (generally rural), schools, libraries, cities, service organizations, community groups, individual artists and student artists, depending upon the needs of their own region.
- B. Provides newsletters, artist and space directories, workshops and technical assistance to all.

What are the Regional Arts Councils?

The state is divided into eleven Regional Arts Councils (RACs) which each support a different geographic area of Minnesota. Minnesota's RACs are unique in the nation as a model for decentralized decision-making for arts grants, programs and services. The Minnesota Legislature established the RAC system in 1977 in order to serve the needs of arts organizations and artists throughout the state on a grassroots level. RACs are funded primarily by the State of Minnesota, supplemented by grants from the private sector. (For more information, contact Leslie Schumacher at 320-968-4290).

What is the Minnesota State Arts Board?

The Minnesota State Arts Board (MSAB) is a state agency funded primarily by the State of Minnesota, supplemented by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the private sector. The MSAB is governed by eleven private citizens appointed by the Governor from all over the state to serve four-year terms. As a state agency, the board sponsors a wide variety of grant programs, services and resource publications for individual artists, arts organizations and schools throughout the state. (For more information, contact the MSAB at (651) 215-1600 or <http://www.arts.state.mn.us>).

How Does MCA, the Arts Community, and the Legislature Fit Together?

At MCA, everyone gets involved and works together:

- ✓ Forming the agenda
- ✓ Funding MCA
- ✓ Gathering information
- ✓ Serving on the board
- ✓ Volunteering time
- ✓ Providing feedback...

At MCA, we connect arts advocates with their legislators, monitor activity at the Capitol, and inform our members of what's happening and who to contact. We also talk directly with legislators as bills move through the Legislature. Arts Advocates from all over the state talk to their legislators about the arts and why they should vote with us.

Legislators vote on arts issues knowing that their constituents believe the arts are important.

Who is MCA?

- MCA's staff and board: Your voice at the Capitol, we organize and educate the arts community to affect the outcome of legislative decisions on arts funding, tax policies that affect philanthropy, and other issues important to the non-profit arts.
- Individual Artists and Arts Advocates, including audiences in every corner of Minnesota.
- Small, medium, rural, suburban and metro arts organizations of all genres and their staff, boards, and audiences (there are 1600 non-profit arts organizations in the state).
- Large arts organizations of all genres and their staff, boards and audiences (there are about 120 arts organizations with annual budgets over \$100,000).
- The Regional Arts Councils staff and boards: eleven independent, state funded grant making organizations supporting small and rural arts organizations and schools all across the state.
- State Arts Board members and staff: the state government's arts funding agency.
- Arts Advocates from the community.

How Does the Legislature Work?

- A. The Legislators and the Governor work hard to make friends in their districts, raise money for their campaigns and get elected. It's important that arts folks get involved in the campaigns of both parties so even more legislators will be friends of the arts. The Legislature has a Senate (67 members) and a House of Representatives (134 members). You live in the district of one state Senator and one state Representative.
- B. There are a lot of issues to be discussed and voted on each year, so the House and Senate split up into committees, just like most non-profit boards do, to get most of their work done. The Chairs of the committees have the most power, so MCA works to educate the Chairs about the arts.
- C. During the legislative session, the state's budget is split into pieces and sent to the committees for discussion and votes, including the arts budget. We pay most attention to the committee that gets the arts. (The budget making process takes place in odd numbered years; 2005, 2007, 2009 etc.).
- D. In both the House and Senate, once committees decide how much money they will spend, they send their piece to the "floor" so that the whole Legislature can vote on it. This is another good time to call or write.
- E. The Senate and House then have to agree with each other in a conference committee how the final bill will look. MCA tries to help them to agree on a high amount for the arts.
- F. When the Legislature is done, the budget goes to the Governor to sign. MCA works to educate the Governor about the arts so he won't veto the budget. When the budget is signed the money goes to the Minnesota State Arts Board and eleven Regional Arts Councils, who together make grants all over the state to our arts community.

What's Happened to Arts Funding In the Last Few Years?

-2003-

The state faced one of the worst per-capita deficits in the nation. Newly elected Governor Pawlenty proposed a 40% cut in arts funding. In the end, the arts were cut by 32%. The political upheaval, in addition to the threats to the arts, sparked an astonishing outpouring of activism from the arts community. A thousand people came to Arts Advocacy Day that February, overflowing the capacity of the History Center. We held coffee parties across the state, ran a phone bank out of the office that reached over 5000 arts activists, and posted a petition on the web that gathered 2000 signatures in just two weeks, among other efforts. Despite our losses at the legislature, the strength and passion of the arts community was undaunted.

-2004-

It was non-appropriations year, but we joined onto the Great Outdoors & Heritage Amendment, which would dedicate a percentage of sales tax revenue to the arts and culture and other things, such as land and water conservation. This bill could double or triple arts funding. With strong grassroots support, we passed the bill through several Senate committees to the floor, where, unfortunately, it died under threat of an unrelated amendment that would have banned gay marriage.

-2005-

It was another deficit year, but we prevented further arts cuts by convincing Gov. Pawlenty to recommend stable arts funding. With much encouragement from arts advocates, the legislature went along with his recommendation.

-2006-

It was a non-appropriations year but the debate on the Great Outdoors and Heritage amendment dominated the

session. Once again, the bill did not advance until the arts were amended onto it in the Senate. In a series of speedy committee hearings, the Senate sent it to the floor and onto a conference committee. The House took all session to catch up. The arts were amended in and out of the bill numerous times as it worked its way to the House floor, and with a dramatic amendment offered by Rep. Charron, the arts got back in to the bill. The conference committee was deadlocked on whether the funds should be dedicated from current revenues or be a part of a new tax, and the bill died.

-2007-

Pushed by MCA and legislative leaders, arts funding was increased by \$1.743 million to \$10.336 million per year. We also added a state poet laureate and restored the Percent for Art program. The Statewide Smoking Ban included a provision that exempts smoking on stage as a part of a theatrical performance as long as notice is given to the audience beforehand. MCA also helped to add a provision to allow nonprofits to sell donated liquor at silent auctions. The biggest push, to pass the Great Outdoors and Heritage Amendment, came close to succeeding when it passed by large margins in both the House and Senate and then out of conference committee. A filibuster on another issue blocked final passage of the bill.

-2008-

This year, we are again focusing on passing the Great Outdoors & Heritage Amendment. It starts where it left off last year, at the Speaker's Desk, waiting for final passage. Once passed by the legislature, it bypasses the Governor and goes directly to the people for a vote in November, 2008.