

Introduction

The *Chippewa Valley Cultural Association*, Inc. (CVCA) was established in 1976 for two reasons: (1) to save an historic building from being demolished, and (2) to create a center for the arts where community people of all ages and backgrounds could experience a wide variety of arts – creative writing, music, dance, theater, storytelling, and visual.

In 2000, the Association was able to fully open the doors of the venue named the *Heyde Center for the Arts*, accomplishing the first of its two goals. The Association has come a long way in realizing its second goal. These achievements are being recognized not only by the community, but also by organizations outside of the Chippewa Valley. For example, the CVCA/Heyde Center for the Arts is the 2006 recipient of the Wisconsin Governor's Award for Supporting the Arts in the "community organization" category. The CVCA/Heyde Center is fulfilling its role as a dynamic community leader.

Accomplishments

It is no secret that the previous financial year (December 1, 2008 November 30, 2009) has been a very difficult and rocky one for many around the world. It has forced people to review and reprioritize their lives to fit into a more challenging economic environment. Many non-profit organizations were battered by decreased individual contributions, foundational giving, and other earned income revenue sources at a time when their services were even more important.

For the Chippewa Valley Cultural Association, the past year has been one of the strongest years it has seen in the past five years. There are a number of reasons for these improvements with no single factor more important than the others:

- This past year was a time when business and area residents realized that an arts and cultural center that supports and promotes local talent and entertainment as well as bringing a wide variety of other performers and artists is a vital part of their community and worth keeping.
- Since the Center opened in 2000, there has been a steady and growing awareness about the CVCA/Heyde Center for the Arts through: improved communications and marketing; a concerted effort to diversify entertainers, and thereby diversify its audience base; increased community presence and involvement; and an influx of new volunteers, donors, and energy dedicated to furthering the mission of the CVCA. One survey comment said, *"thanks! You folks provide an interesting variety of new and known groups. Providing an opportunity to see new groups is key for us."*
- There has been a significant increase in use of the facility for weddings, workshops, and outside managed performances that has resulted in a large number of new people coming to the Center. Once inside, the Center's beauty and charisma sells itself.
- The high quality of the arts and cultural events featured at the Heyde Center for the Arts have helped build the reputation and credibility of the Center. Another survey respondent wrote, *"You've done a great job of developing an interesting program. And, you've drawn some great music. Keep up the good work."* While another person wrote, *"I love the variety and the season ticket options."*
- The CVCA/Heyde Center's commitment to keeping the arts affordable and accessible has had a wide appeal and is appreciated by community residents.

In some ways, the CVCA/Heyde Center has been scrambling to keep up to the community's raised expectations in the light of three successful years of programming. The more arts and cultural excitement the CVCA generates, the more new avenues and possibilities there are to explore and exploit.

Given the soft economy, the CVCA has been reluctant to hire more staff until its financial situation is even stronger and more able to sustain the extra staff. If the CVCA's financial situation continues to improve in the 2009/2010 financial year, then there are plans to hire one or two key part-time staff positions. In the meantime, the desire to respond to as many of the new opportunities as possible has caused the CVCA to further strengthen the capacity of its limited staff.

It has pushed the CVCA to establish a better, more effective volunteer network starting from the Board of Directors down to the event staff. For example, the choice of new Board Directors is based on an evaluation of the needs of the organization, and new volunteers and interns are being recruited for their specific talents website developers, light and sound technology experience, and marketing expertise as well as their desire to get involved in the arts.

The mission of the Chippewa Valley Cultural Association (CVCA) is: (1) to be a strong advocate and supporter of local artists, musicians, writers, artisanal food/beverage producers, and other performers; and (2) to bring unique arts and cultural performances to the area reinforces and complements the artistic and creative offerings that exist in the area. The following is an overview of what the CVCA did to accomplish this mission over the past year.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE ARTS

Attendance numbers at the performances and exhibitions in 2008 2009 increased substantially over the previous year (2007 2008), showing a 29% increase in numbers from the year before and a 17% increase from FY 2007 2006. Last year a minimum of 11,258 people came to the performances and exhibitions of approximately 678 artists and performers. These number do not reflect the number of people who visited the Center for facility rentals such as entertainment shows, arts related workshops, and other classes.

The CVCA is able to monitor participant attendance based on three main age characteristics through the sale of specially priced tickets for each group: adults (ages 18 61 years), seniors (62 years and older), and youth (normally under the age of 18 years, though some of the performances are extended to 22 years of age). One of the goals established three years ago was to diversify the audience base from a largely senior audience to include more adults, youth and families. The age breakdown of audiences in FY 20082009 was 36% adults, 30% seniors, and 34% youth.

ENGAGING YOUTH IN THE ARTS

The increase in youth involvement has been accomplished through a conscious and concerted effort to include more youth as program decision makers and organizers, as performers, and as audience members. The efforts included more collaborations with local youth performers/artists, the Chippewa Falls Area School District, private schools, the home school network, and other youth focused arts and cultural organizations such as the Chippewa Valley Youth Symphony and the Chippewa Falls Music Association.

Over the past three years, the CVCA has made great strides in creating a dynamic and supportive partnership with the Chippewa Falls school districts and in strengthening a relationship with the local Catholic schools. As schools continue to tighten their budgets, they tend to cut arts and cultural activities because these activities seem to be less important than other important skills such as reading, writing and mathematics. However, it has been proven that the arts strengthen creativity and problem solving skills that have a direct impact on a child's ability to succeed in school and out of school. Instead of blaming the school system, the CVCA sees that part of its mission is to increase the quality and variety of arts and cultural opportunities available to students in public and private schools as well as those within the home schooling network.

Some of the accomplishments in 2008 2009 include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The Chippewa Falls Music Association, the CF High School and the CVCA collaborated on a highly successful concert called the Valentine's Day Jazz Jam held in the Heyde Center for the Arts. It was so successful that this has become an annual event at the Center.
- Over 1,100 elementary school students from both public and private schools as well as homeschooled students attended the premiere of the musical *The Seventh Destiny*.
- The Chill on the Hill series (summer activity) aimed at introducing children from ages two to ten to the arts saw another increase in attendance numbers. This series was promoted together with youth activities at the Chippewa Falls Public Library and the Chippewa Falls Museum for Industry and Technology.
- *Rumplestiltskin* by Missoula Children's Theatre engaged area youth in the theater over the summer. One shy boy with a stutter started out reluctantly, but finished strong. He went on to take on a star role in the middle school production of *The Jungle Book* that fall.
- The musical director of the Eau Claire Chamber Orchestra spent time working with students at the high school and selecting a few to participate in two public concerts at the Center. One of the performances was aimed at encouraging family involvement even allowing questions from youth audience members.
- Free season opening performance of the Chippewa Valley Youth Symphony at the Heyde Center.
- Holiday Bash 2009 was an idea presented by two young bands from the area. The band members organized the lineup, the publicity materials, the sound tech, and took an assertive role in promoting the concert including passing out flyers at the local high schools and putting up posters at youth hang outs.
- In 2010 the CVCA in collaboration with two music teachers (the heads of the band and the orchestra departments) at the Chippewa Falls High School and Middle School has contracted two groups of artists that the teachers felt would significantly complement their music department goals by working directly with the students in school as part of an artist-in-residence project at the schools. All of these successful interactions have lead to new collaborations 2010 opportunities with visual arts instructors, the guidance counselors, and vocal instructors.

FURTHER DIVERSIFYING THE AUDIENCE AND PERFORMER BASE

Due to the difficulties and sensitivities associated with tracking and monitoring ethnicity, disability, and socioeconomic differences of event participants, the Center is only able to offer strong, but anecdotal, proof of an increasing diversity in its audience base.

The CVCA has recorded an increase the number of people with disabilities attending performances by tracking the increase in people requesting the special accommodation services offered by the Center. These services include special seating for people (including youth) with wheelchairs and other mobility challenges as well as the special needs of visual and hearing impaired individuals. One audience member new to the Heyde Center was so impressed by the accommodations and support her family and her disabled son received from the event volunteers, she has volunteered to dedicate some of her marketing skills to promoting the Heyde Center to people with disabilities.

Other indicators of increased involvement by minority ethnic and socioeconomic groups include examples such as: the 44th Annual Spring Art Show included the work of a self-identified Mexican immigrant; a Native American featured as an artist of the month; the provision of more free or very low cost performances open to the public that have increased audience sizes; and an increased variety of performers (African Americans, people with disabilities, Native American and Asian artists and performers) that have brought new groups of individuals to the Center. A good example is the support and inclusion of area Japanese Americans at the October 2009 performance of two Japanese Taiko Drum Groups. These individuals identified themselves as Japanese Americans and helped welcome our Japanese guests, shared their stories of home, and helped with communication challenges.

Another important factor in the increase of audience size and diversity is the variety of events that the Heyde Center has hosted. In FY 2008 2009, the Center hosted 70 arts and cultural events.

Analysis of these performances shows:

- 61% of the performances highlighted local artists and/or performers; 32% featured state or national level performers (with 32% of these artists/performers coming from Wisconsin); and 7% of the performers were international.
- Cultural performances included: Latino and Latino fusion music (MadiSalsa and Compadres), Japanese music and performance (Japanese Taiko Drummers), Russian folk and secular music (Lyra), Jewish American music (Fiddler on the Roof meets Oh Brother Where Art Thou? by L'il Rev), German dance and music (Balletschule Feibicke and Dorf Kapelle).
- Forty-eight percent of the events were musical concerts, 19% were visual arts exhibitions, 7% were theatrical performances (musicals/drama), 9% music and audience dance events with a further 3% being solely dance performances. Seven percent of the events were variety shows or open mic type events (e.g., Vaudeville and Poetry, Prose & Music nights), 4% were standup comedy or humorous presentations, and 1% promoted local food and beverage products and producers.

Post program surveys (online, written, and semi-structured interviews at the event) have been very positive about the diversity and high quality of the entertainment offered at the Heyde Center for the Arts.

PROGRAM PLANNING

The CVCA has a multilayered planning process for its programming. The layers help provide an overall structure to the building of the programming year, but also allow for spontaneity, new opportunities and advantages, and a wider involvement of people in the program decision making process.

The first layer is the Entertainment Package Committee. The main focus of this committee is to lay out several cornerstone events in the coming calendar year, approximately one per month. The programming committee draws inspiration from comes from performance feedback, surveys, recommendations, requests, and ideas of CVCA supporters and audience members. The Entertainment Package is designed to take risks by promoting new, diverse, and uncommon arts opportunities for residents in the Chippewa Valley. This is to ensure that the Center is exposing residents to a wide variety of arts opportunities.

This year 2009 2010, the CVCA has created a new subcommittee of the Entertainment Package Committee that will review new and original manuscripts from local playwrights as well as takes ideas from local directors to set up the two to three plays the CVCA will undertake during a year. This is playing to the unique niche that the CVCA can provide in an area with three strong community theater guilds/groups and a university theater department.

The second layer is planning, organizing and implementing arts and cultural events through a network of ongoing community collaborations. Ownership and control of the events are held jointly strengthening and empowering all organizations involved. In this planning layer, members of the CVCA (staff, board and/or program committee members) work together with other collaborators to develop the programming. Examples of a few successful collaborations to date are: Eau Claire Jazz Festival (final concert is at the Heyde Center), The Chippewa Herald Spring Art Show (over 100 local artists), Valentine's Day Jazz Jam (Chippewa Falls Music Association/High School), Chippewa Valley Community Chorus, and visual art exhibits by the Beaver Creek Photography Club, the Valley Artist Association, and the Hugh Mandelert Art Society. Beyond strengthening local arts organizations, these collaborations widen the accessibility of these events to more performers/artists and the communication of these events to different audiences.

The third layer of planning is relatively unstructured and depends on the initiative of local artists and/or performers. It is the hardest layer to manage, but it is at the heart of the CVCA's desire to empower artists and performers from the area. This is where the CVCA's Executive Director takes on a stronger artistic director role by being open, accessible, and available to listen to the ideas/visions of new artists, performers, directors, or musicians and to encourage those ideas with artistic worth to take the lead on a production. Some of the most rewarding exhibitions, concerts or theater events at the Heyde Center have been the excitement and sense of accomplishment that comes from performers and artists talking about "my first PAID gig," or "my first solo exhibition;" the premiere of a new and original musicals; or the premiere of a new musical group all of which has happened at the Heyde Center for the Arts in the past two years.

The fourth layer of planning involves expanding its network of national and international contacts. This network has resulted in exciting and important performances such as nationally touring groups "In the Mood a 40s musical revue," "I Love a Piano," internationally touring groups Japanese Taiko

Drummers and Heidel Norwegian Fiddlers by being accessible and amenable. These opportunities have lead to some of the most memorable performances at the Center.

EVENT AMENITIES

Although the high-quality performances and exhibits that the CVCA/Heyde Center present are critical to audience satisfaction, there are a number of other factors that determine whether the entire experience is an enjoyable one for the audience member. The CVCA/Heyde Center is undertaking a year-long survey of audience members to learn how to improve and grow as a center for the arts.

An important accomplishment for the Center is the high ranking that audience members have given to the overall cleanliness of the building, seating options, pre-performance options, and the aesthetics of the building.

Thinking about the last event you attended at the Heyde Center for the Arts, how would you rank the Center's performance at providing the following event amenities.							
Answer Options	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
(1) Cleanliness of the Building	0	0	9	25	0	3.74	34
(2) Seating Options (location)	0	4	12	18	0	3.41	34
(3) Seating Options (style/type of seats)	0	7	9	16	1	3.28	33
(4) Disability Access (hearing, sight, other physical)	0	2	8	10	13	3.40	33
(5) Ticketing Options (cost, accessibility, location)	0	1	11	21	0	3.61	33
(6) Concessions Options (foods)	0	5	13	8	6	3.12	32
(7) Concessions Options (beverages)	0	4	13	10	6	3.22	33
(8) Pre- Performance Options (art galleries, concessions, other)	2	2	13	11	5	3.18	33
(9) Post- Performance Options (art galleries, concessions, other)	2	2	8	11	10	3.22	33
(10) Aesthetics of the Building (decoration, restoration)	0	0	10	22	0	3.69	32
(11) Friendliness and professionalism of the staff/volunteers.	0	1	7	26	0	3.74	34
Other (please specify)							5

The CVCA/Heyde Center will continue to survey audience members and work on ways of improving the overall experience of audience members.

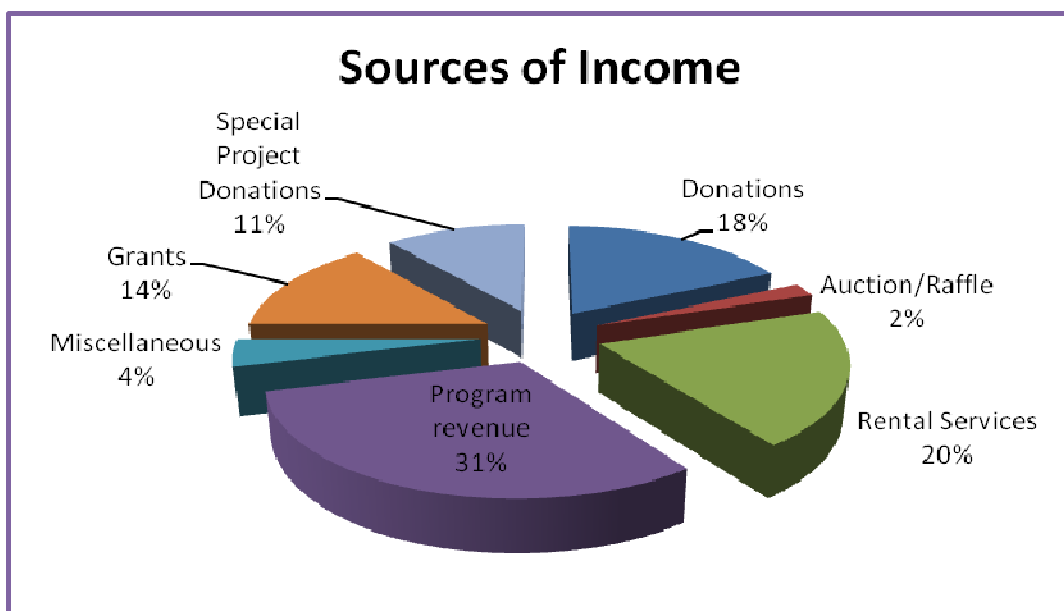
Financial Review

Revenue

The Chippewa Valley Cultural Association has pursued a diversified revenue strategy to ensure the financial health and strength of the organization and its ability to pursue its mission. According to the organizational 990 (financial tax statement), the total income reported for the Chippewa Valley Cultural Association during its FY 2008 – 2009 (December 1, 2008 to November 30, 2009) was \$297,310. Total expenses for FY 2008 – 2009 was \$256,171 (not including building and equipment depreciation). The difference between revenue and expenditure was money that is designated for the CVCA Endowment or for specific programs in the year 2010.

There are seven main sources of income for the CVCA:

- Donations – individual contributions, gifts in honor of or in memory of someone, appeal letters, fund raising events
- Auction/Raffles – an online and silent auction has been successful *Savoring the Arts*, and product raffles were successful at *Taste of the North*
- Rental Services – auditorium and other small room rental, beverage services, and other facility fees for assorted services
- Programs – art sales and art shows, box office revenue, concession sales, entertainment package sponsors, gift certificates/entertainment package passes
- Miscellaneous – membership subscriptions, book sales, other revenue (Milk Moola, Gordy’s receipts, etc.)
- Grants – designated funding from philanthropic and corporate foundations to support projects
- Special Project Donations – designated funding for capital improvement projects such as air conditioners, window coverings, visual art hanging system, etc.



Last year, there was approximately a 17% increase in individual donations not associated with a specific fundraising activity. This is an indirect indicator of the success of the CVCA appeal letter campaigns. Overall there was a 143% increase in donations.

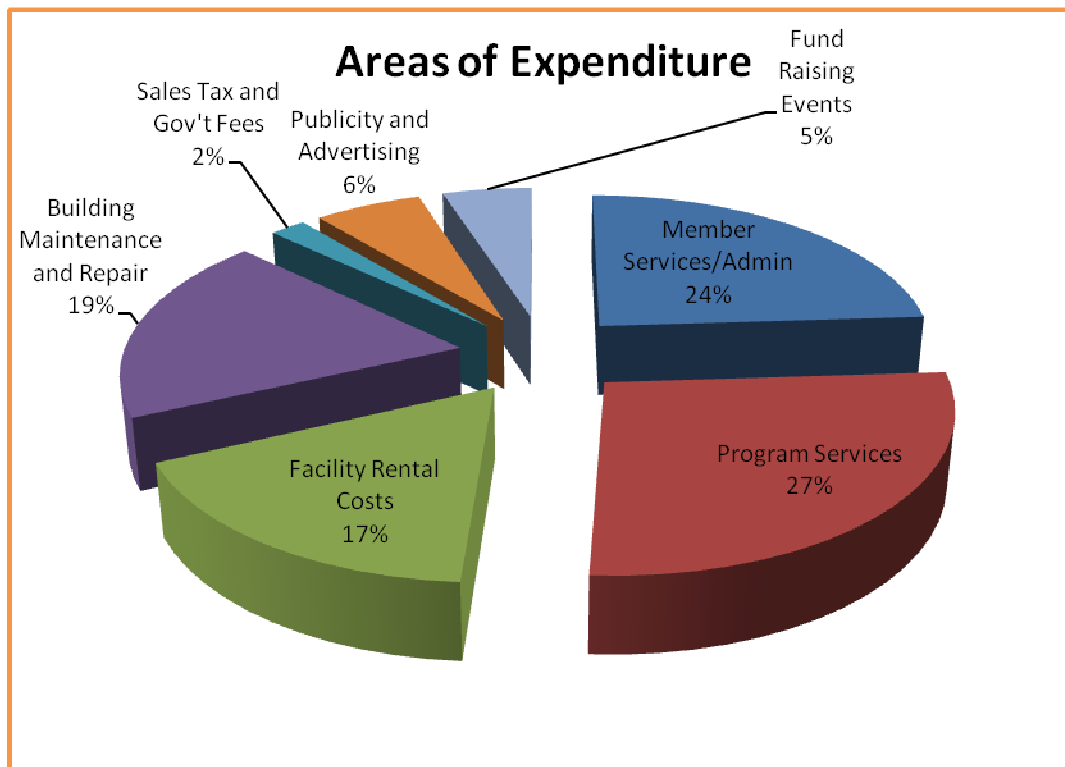
The two major fundraising events (Taste of the North and Savoring the Arts fundraising dinner) have seen a 113% increase in fund raising activities from last year. Box office revenue saw a 13% increase over budget and a 26% increase over the past year. Art sales have seen a 85% increase from last year sales, but last year's sales were down significantly. Program Sponsorships increased 37% from last year, and it does not take into account in-kind donations and trades, but does include some sponsorships for 2010.

Rental services have become an increasingly important and stable source of income for the CVCA. Last year there was a 72% increase in revenue from facility rental and services.

Expenditures

There was a fifteen percent increase in expenditures from the previous year, but this is due in large part to increases in costs associated with the increased level of building use (facility rentals and programming). The increase in expenditures is offset by the increase in donations, fund raising, and facility rental. There were seven main expenditure categories in 2008 – 2009. They are:

- Member Services/Administration – personnel costs associated with membership, administration of the day-to-day operations, communication costs, insurance
- Program Services – performance fees, commissions to artists, concessions purchases, personnel costs associated with programming, marketing, communication costs
- Facility Rental Costs – bartending services, bar supplies and inventories, personnel costs associated with facility rentals, marketing, communication costs



- Building Maintenance and Repairs – various service contracts such as elevator, security and fire systems/monitoring, heating and cooling system maintenance and repairs, utilities, improvements, etc.
- Publicity and advertising – paid advertising and production of publicity materials
- Fund Raising – costs associated with appeal letters and events such as Savoring the Arts and Taste of the North

Conclusion

It is wonderful to see the Chippewa Valley Cultural Association/Heyde Center for the Arts complete one of its strongest financial years in recent memory. This is not the time to be complacent or to see business and corporate sponsors, government agencies, community groups or individuals reduce their commitment to the arts. In fact it is even more important to consolidate these gains and allow the Heyde Center for the Arts continue to grow and enrich the community – not only through its economic contributions but to the community’s health and well-being. The incredible rich artistic and creative heritage found in the Chippewa Valley is sometimes recognized and valued more by visitors to the community than to the residents.